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THE GIFT OF D. D. HOME.

By D. D. HOME.

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**INCIDENTS IN MY LIFE :**

FIRST SERIES. 1863.

**INCIDENTS IN MY LIFE :**

SECOND SERIES. 1872.

**LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF SPIRITUALISM.**

1877.

---

By Madame DUNGLAS HOME.

**D. D. HOME :  
HIS LIFE AND MISSION.**

1888.



*Ethel L. Goldie  
Edwin L.*

THE  
GIFT OF D. D. HOME

BY  
MADAME DUNGLAS HOME

"He that gives shall receive Light"

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# CONTENTS.

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## CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
HOME'S MISSION AS VIEWED BY SOME ENGLISH WRITERS OF NOTE :	
EVIDENCE OF MR. BUCKLE, SIR EDWIN ARNOLD, MR. T. A.	
TROLLOPE, WILLIAM AND MARY HOWITT, LORD LYTTON, ETC. .	I

## CHAPTER II.

THE EVIDENCE OF SOME AMERICAN WITNESSES. . . . .	38
--	----

## CHAPTER III.

THE YEAR 1855. . . . .	70
------------------------	----

## CHAPTER IV.

FLORENTINE SÉANCES AND OTHERS . . . . .	97
---	----

## CHAPTER V.

HOME IN ENGLISH SOCIETY . . . . .	124
-----------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER VI.

THE CHAWNER SÉANCES AND OTHERS . . . . .	161
--	-----

## CHAPTER VII.

THE HOME OF FICTION . . . . .	194
-------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER VIII.

	PAGE
PROFESSORS FARADAY AND TYNDALL—PUBLIC READINGS—SÉANCES AT BRIGHTON AND IN SCOTLAND . . . . .	213

## CHAPTER IX.

SCIENTIFIC OBSERVERS DESCRIBE THE VISION SEEN BY THEM IN A CRYSTAL SPHERE—OTHER REMARKABLE PHENOMENA . . .	248
---	-----

## CHAPTER X.

SÉANCES OF 1868-1870 . . . . .	276
--------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

BRISTOL, SCOTLAND, LONDON, AND ST. PETERSBURG—TESTIMONY OF RUSSIAN MEN OF SCIENCE . . . . .	293
--	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

LAST YEARS ON EARTH . . . . .	348
-------------------------------	-----

---

INDEX . . . . .	379
-----------------	-----

# THE GIFT OF D. D. HOME

## CHAPTER I.

*HOME'S MISSION AS VIEWED BY SOME ENGLISH WRITERS  
OF NOTE: EVIDENCE OF MR. BUCKLE, SIR EDWIN  
ARNOLD, MR. T. A. TROLLOPE, WILLIAM AND MARY  
HOWITT, LORD LYTTON, ETC.*

"I HAVE no patience with the cowardice that withholds testimony from truth—and hope I never may have," wrote Mrs. S. C. Hall to Mr. Home in the spring of 1863. The declaration was provoked by the multitude of initials and dashes that represented in the first volume of "Incidents in My Life" the names of witnesses who feared ridicule more than they loved truth. In many cases, those most enthusiastic in declaring their belief in private were precisely the persons who shrank most timorously from avowing it to the world. The natural result of their lack of courage and candour was, that on the appearance of his book, Mr. Home found himself exposed to attacks which few men would have supported with the generous forbearance that he displayed. The names given in his pages made but an inconsiderable show in comparison with the names suppressed; and it was hinted by some reviewers, and more than insinuated by others, that the anonymous narratives contained in the "Incidents" had been fabricated by the author himself. Any other man than Home would have answered such calumnies by printing in the second edition of his work every name that he

A

had withheld from the first; but his self-sacrificing consideration for his friends enabled him to support in silence the painful position to which they had condemned him; and when the second edition of the "Incidents" appeared, it contained only the names that had been given in the first—the names of the few who were bold enough to attest their evidence by their signature.

In the following year, 1864, the timidity of the many was once more signally exemplified. When Mr. Home was expelled from Rome on a charge of sorcery, and availed himself of the good offices of Mr. Roebuck to bring the question of his expulsion before the House of Commons, it was proposed by some of his English friends that an address should be presented to him expressive of their sympathy and confidence, and testifying to their belief in Spiritualism. The suggestion was enthusiastically taken up by a courageous minority; but the men whose testimony would most have impressed the public mind—Sir E. B. Lytton, Robert Bell, Robert Chambers, and others—shrank with their habitual timidity from giving their names to the world.

"If such a declaration is signed by about twenty men in whom the public ought to and would confide," wrote Mr. S. C. Hall on June 14, 1864, "it would be a testimonial to your honour, and certainly a right thing to do. But will there be twenty men to sign it—such men as we need? I have more hopes than fears. . . . My doubts only refer to what may be termed a *public* appeal; they have no reference to a document signed for your comfort and the satisfaction of your friends."

The writer's hopes were not justified by the result. A hundred distinguished men and women were ready to express their faith and sympathy in private, but not even a score had the courage to append their signatures to a public address. The testimonial accordingly assumed a strictly private form.

Such facts would in themselves be a sufficient reply to the doubts cast by a portion of the English press on

the anonymous narratives contained in the "Incidents"—even had that incredulity been honestly felt by every reviewer who professed it. It seems more than probable that it was largely feigned. The number of men of letters and journalists who sought and obtained invitations to the séances of Home was so great, that among the critics of his book there must almost certainly have been some who were well aware of the authenticity of the very statements which they pretended to discredit, and who could themselves have supplied various of the names which Mr. Home had omitted. In bringing together with labour and difficulty the facts contained in this and my preceding volume, it has been impossible to avoid observing that, if any one profession was better represented than another among the witnesses to the phenomena, that profession was the world of letters and journalism. I am certainly very far from having recovered the names of all its English representatives who were present at séances with Mr. Home, but even the imperfect list in my possession is a striking commentary on the attitude of the English press a quarter of a century ago towards Spiritualism. To read the reviews of the "Incidents," it might have been supposed that not a single man of literary eminence in England was a Spiritualist, and that not half-a-dozen had ever been present at a séance with Mr. Home. As a matter of fact, quite a number of well-known writers were either declared or secret converts, and many more had taken that first step on the road towards belief—the discovery of their inability to comprehend or explain the phenomena they had witnessed. Not one in ten had given his name to the public; but it is difficult to believe that the names so timorously withheld were a secret from the whole of the reviewers who attacked Mr. Home in 1863, and again in 1872, for publishing so much anonymous testimony—which they courteously insinuated he had himself invented. Some of those writers surely must have known that the statement made on page 206 of

the first volume of the "Incidents" was absolutely correct:—

"I hope," wrote Mr. Home, "that both I and my friends may be in some measure excused for giving their narratives without their names. If I were at liberty to make them public, they would add greatly to the value of the narrative, and the public would have the opportunity of being greatly surprised at finding out who are the persons who have investigated the subject, and vouch for these remarkable facts. In society they are well known to many; and perhaps nothing is more strange than the entire belief with which these facts are spoken of and received in large, mixed companies, when compared with the expression of entire disbelief with which they are accompanied in nearly all notices in the press. Of those who will openly condemn this narrative in their journals, hardly one does not reckon amongst his intimate and valued friends, or relatives, or co-contributors, several who are with good reason entire believers. It would be curious to contrast the language he holds to such persons with that he uses in describing my book to the ignorant masses, who, he meanly knows, expect such abuse at his hands and will be pleased to hear it. If it were necessary, I could give some names which would amply justify what I have said of these poor leaders of the blind."

Mr. Home never did give these names. This forbearance of a strong mind which would not bend to insult appears constantly under different forms in the actions of his life and mission. In the absence of a chapter from his pen on "Writers I have Known," I am unable to do full justice to the subject; but the names and facts in my possession are sufficiently numerous and interesting (so far as England is concerned) to induce me to devote a chapter to literature and journalism, as represented at the English séances of Home. Imperfect as my summary must necessarily be, it will serve to prove, that while the English press continued year after year to heap insults and abuse on Home, and to denounce or ridicule Spiritualism and Spiritualists, men and women of high intellectual ability and great literary celebrity were being led, by their investigations of the phenomena associated with his séances, to conclusions which would have startled the public and confounded the press, had they been openly declared.



Take, for instance, Mr. H. T. Buckle. That distinguished writer and uncompromising materialist was, of all men, most unlike the description which the *Saturday Review* offensively and untruly applied to the persons brave enough to allow their names to be published in the "Incidents." "The witnesses," wrote the *Saturday* reviewer, "are Mystics, Theosophists, Mesmerists, Swedenborgians—fanatics of one sort or other, educated and living in an excited and unnatural state of the spiritual faculties." As a matter of fact, they were nothing of the kind; but even a critic like the above would have shrunk from declaring that "an excited and unnatural state of the spiritual faculties" was a characteristic of so hard a thinker and logical a reasoner as Buckle, had that distinguished writer's testimony been placed before the world. It is deeply to be regretted that his untimely death prevented his intended resumption of an examination of the phenomena which he had commenced in a spirit as dispassionate as philosophical. As fate would have it, Mr. Buckle's observations were limited to a single séance with Mr. Home, but even the manifestations of that one séance impressed him strongly, and compelled from him admissions hardly to be expected from such a man.

Mr. Buckle's introduction to Home and Spiritualism was brought about in the following manner. In the year 1860, Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Mitchell, of Carol-side, Earlston, Berwickshire, made the acquaintance of Home in London, and were present at several of his séances. Mr. Mitchell, as his letters show, became a firm believer in Spiritualism; and I find him writing, on the 30th of April, 1861, from 6 Great Stanhope Street, W.:—

"MY DEAR HOME,— . . . Mr. Buckle dined here the night before last, and I talked with him about Spiritualism. He seems anxious to investigate the subject, and, I think, would do so fairly. I said if I ever had an opportunity, I would ask if you would

come and meet him here. He is a friend of Robert Bell's."

Mr. Home had no objection to meet Mr. Buckle at his friend's or elsewhere; and a séance was ultimately appointed at Mrs. Milner Gibson's, wife of the then President of the Board of Trade.

"Dear Friend," writes Mrs. Gibson to Mr. Home: "Buckle comes with Bell whenever he is to come—that is arranged between them. I will write at once to Bell to see which Monday Buckle can come."

And in a subsequent letter:—

"Mrs. Parks<sup>1</sup> spoke to me yesterday about having the séance *chez elle* on Monday evening. I told her who was coming. I confess it would not be so well, as Lady Londonderry and Lady Jocelyn do not know Mrs. Parks; and Buckle also (whom I do not know) may prefer witnessing what, as yet, is incredible for him at our house. What do you wish? We should all prefer *chez moi*; but if you wish a change let me know as soon as possible, and I will manage for the best at once."

Mr. Home shared Mrs. Milner Gibson's opinion that the séance had better take place at her house; and on the appointed Monday, Mr. Buckle and his friend Mr. Robert Bell duly joined the circle in Hyde Park Place. In the September following, Mrs. Mitchell wrote from Carolside to Mrs. Home that Mr. Buckle had been staying there, and declared himself "much struck with all he saw" at the séance at Mrs. Milner Gibson's. "He has a great intellect," added Mrs. Mitchell, "and will investigate the subject further."

Unfortunately, the investigation was never to be resumed. Mr. Buckle's health broke down under the pressure of severe literary labours, and he went to pass the winter in the East—a journey from which he never returned. In Egypt he made the acquaintance of a Mr. J. A. Longmore, who contributed to the *Athenæum*

<sup>1</sup> With whom Mr. and Mrs. Home were staying at the time.

of January 25, 1873, some interesting reminiscences of his distinguished travelling-companion of twelve years before. On one occasion, their talk fell on Spiritualism ; and the following account is given by Mr. Longmore of what passed :—

“During a visit to the ‘Canopus’ on the Nile, some reference being made to Modern Spiritualism, Mr. Buckle graphically narrated his experience during a *séance* at which he had been present shortly before leaving London. This *séance* took place in the house, he said, of a Cabinet Minister, who, he was quite satisfied, would not have lent himself to any collusive trickery to facilitate the proceedings of the mediums.<sup>1</sup> The chief of these was Mr. Home ; and various marvellous phenomena were produced, more particularly the floating a large, circular drawing-room table in mid-air. These manifestations Mr. Buckle was unable to explain on any known physical laws. ‘But,’ he added, ‘while I cannot admit there is anything supernatural about them, I think it quite possible there may be a development of some new force well worthy of scientific investigation.’ He afterwards mentioned that Mr. Home called on him shortly after this *séance*, and told him that he was anxious that he, a man well known in the literary world, and recognised as no granter of propositions which he had not duly examined for himself, would take up the subject of Spiritualism, and after sufficiently testing the reality of its phenomena—in doing which Mr. Home offered every assistance in his power—announce to the world to what conclusion he had come. Mr. Home volunteered that, whenever Mr. Buckle wished it, he would readily come to his house and perform his experiments there, so that there might be no suspicion of apparatus or collusion being employed to deceive him. In conclusion, Mr. Buckle told us he was so pleased with Mr. Home, that he was quite willing to agree to his proposal, but that the second volume of his book being then nearly ready for the press, his time had been so occupied with it that he was quite unable to take the subject of Spiritualism up before his health broke down and he was compelled to leave England. But he was resolved to investigate it on his return home—a return which, alas ! never took place.”

If one *séance* with Mr. Home could compel so thorough a rationalist as Mr. Buckle to confess his inability to explain by any known physical laws the manifestations he witnessed, and to “think it quite possible there might be a development of some new force well worthy of scientific investigation,” what

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Milner Gibson made some claim to medial power ; as also, I believe, did Lady Jocelyn.

might not further inquiry have done for him, had he been spared to pursue it?

Says the Eastern aphorism :—"There came in a wise man and a fool. The wise man heard, investigated, and decided. The fool decided." Those shallow critics of Spiritualism who speak out of their ignorance of the séances of Home may profitably take to heart the lesson taught them by so prominent a leader of modern English thought as Mr. Buckle.

Letters from Buckle's friends the Mitchells show that their acquaintance with Home continued over a number of years, and various passages would seem to declare that, as one consequence of such acquaintance, both husband and wife—but especially the former—had ranked themselves on the side of Spiritualism. For instance, in the letter of September 11, 1861, to which I have referred above, Mrs. Mitchell writes to Mrs. Home—who was then slowly passing from earth :—

"It is very kind of you to promise me your portrait. I need not tell you how very much I shall value it, though the memory of your dear, gentle face will never be effaced from my mind. I am so glad that I had the happiness of knowing you, and I feel sure that we shall often and often meet and see much of one another in long years to come—unless you progress too far above and beyond me. Still, affection is a tie that must bring together those who are mutually attracted to one another.

"I had not heard that Mr. Home had lost his power—so to speak. I have no doubt that the kind consideration of his spirit-friends thought it better for his health that he should have rest from mediumship."

Turning to Mr. Mitchell's share of the correspondence, I find him writing to Mr. Home on the 2nd of August, 1861—

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Many and sincere thanks for your kind and thoughtful letter. You were the only one, except those in this house, who sent me an affectionate word of remembrance upon my birthday. . . . My mother gave us such an interesting account of the séance at which Lady Paulett was present. She has had a life of sadness and suffering, and a knowledge of the truth of Spiritualism has brought great comfort to her. . . . We are going to try a circle to-night: I wish we were going to join yours instead."

"I did not know till I heard from you," writes Mr. Mitchell a few weeks later, "that your power was gone for a time. It is no doubt for some wise reason that it is so; but I know how blank it must seem to you to be deprived of constant communion with your spirit-friends, and I hope you will soon again have your mediumship restored more perfectly than ever."

The letters of succeeding years are all in the same strain, but as they give no details of the Mitchells' séances with Home, it would be superfluous to quote from them. Enough has already been cited to show that Mr. Buckle's Scotch friend and host was one of the many converts to Spiritualism made by the séances of Mr. Home.

Sir Edwin Arnold, poet, journalist, and Orientalist, entered on the investigation of Spiritualism about a quarter of a century ago; and in addition to his inquiries into the dubious powers of mediums whose "spirits" could never be persuaded to face the light, he was present at various séances with Home. From letters of the Mr. Bertolacci mentioned in my former volume as the indirect means of Mr Ruskin's introduction to Mr. Home, it appears that Bertolacci was well acquainted with Sir E. Arnold—then but beginning his brilliant career; and he writes of the distinguished editor of the *Daily Telegraph* as though Sir Edwin had been no less fully convinced of the truth of Spiritualism than himself. In doing so, Mr. Bertolacci probably exaggerated; for the cautiously-weighted letter from which I am about to quote limits its declaration of faith to a somewhat more emphatic avowal of the conclusions previously arrived at by Mr. Buckle.

The séances at which Sir Edwin Arnold was present with Mr. Home evidently took place previous to the year of the Dialectical Society's inquiry—1869.<sup>1</sup> Pressed by the Secretary of that body to state the results of his investigations of Spiritualism, Sir Edwin replied as follows, under date of July 10, 1869:—

<sup>1</sup> "Mr. Arnold and his sister are just returned from a visit to the Holy Land. He is a firm Spiritualist." Mrs. S. C. Hall, writing to Mr. Home in America, March 5, 1865.

"I have never yet been able to fulfil my intention of expressing, either by letter or *viva voce*, my conclusions upon the question of 'spiritual manifestations.' . . . Understanding, however, that your investigations are drawing to a close, I feel myself bound to make some statement of my opinion, since you have included me among your cited witnesses, and since I have been present at a considerable number of more or less remarkable séances. The long and careful inquiries which your committee seems to have conducted render it less important that I should, as I intended, recapitulate my own experiences as an observer of the alleged phenomena.<sup>1</sup> All I desire to say, and all I can say (without reservations and explanations impossible in so limited a space) is this: that I regard many of the 'manifestations' as genuine, undeniable, and inexplicable by any known law, or any collusion, arrangement, or deception of the senses, and that I conceive it to be the duty and the interest of men of science and sense to examine and prosecute the inquiry as one which has fairly passed from the region of ridicule. I am not inclined to consider what I hold the *veritable* phenomena as being in any way *super-natural*, but rather as initiatory demonstrations of mental and vital power not yet comprehended nor regularly exercised. With reference to the supposed interpositions and actions of departed spirits, I can see nothing against the analogy of nature in this, but it is not a proved fact for me by what I have myself witnessed. The statement to which I am prepared to attach my name is this: that, conjoined with the rubbish of much ignorance and some deplorable folly and fraud, there is a body of well-established facts, beyond denial and outside any philosophical explanation, which facts promise to open a new world of human inquiry and experience, are in the highest degree interesting, and tend to elevate ideas of the continuity of life, and to reconcile, perhaps, the materialist and metaphysician."

Neither Mr. Buckle's nor Sir Edwin Arnold's testimony was in my possession when I wrote my former volume; and with the evidence of a third man of letters, Mr. T. A. Trollope, I was not fully acquainted. It is a striking, if unintended testimony to the value of the mass of facts contained in my first work, that such a hostile, and indeed unfair critic as the *Athenæum*<sup>2</sup> could only bring one slight and solitary charge of inaccuracy against me, which was based on Mr. Trollope's letter to that journal in the spring of 1863. True, the reviewer talks vaguely in the plural of the "inaccu-

<sup>1</sup> The Committee of the Dialectical Society probably felt disappointed, as I do, that Sir Edwin Arnold should have departed from his original intention of relating what he had witnessed.

<sup>2</sup> June 2, 1888.

racies" I have committed, but as his one definite accusation is limited to this letter of Mr. Trollope's, I may reasonably infer that the remaining lapses from accuracy at which he hints are pure creations of his fancy.

As regards Mr. Trollope's evidence, he very unfairly passes over without remark that striking portion of it which was published in 1855, and charges me with having extracted from the letter of 1803 only such portions as suited my purpose. My answer is, that I had no intention of doing anything of the kind, but that, at the time of writing my former work, I had not seen Mr. Trollope's letter in its entirety. My extract was made from Mr. A. R. Wallace's little volume, "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism," in which a portion of the letter was printed, and naturally I could quote no more of it than Mr. Wallace gave (page 91 of his book). I have now obtained a copy of the whole letter—with the result that it convicts, not me, but the *Athenæum* reviewer, of inaccuracy, an inaccuracy amounting to an important perversion of the facts.

Says the reviewer: "Trollope continued to take an interest in the subject, and to believe that such of Home's performances as he was allowed to see were neither explicable by known physical laws nor cases of vulgar conjuring. 'But,' he added in the letter to us of 1863, 'I cannot say that any of *those*<sup>1</sup> have been such as *wholly* to exclude the possibility of their being deceptive, and indeed, to use the honest word required by the circumstances, fraudulent."

This garbled quotation is more creditable to the ingenuity of the reviewer than to his candour. He applies Mr. Trollope's words—unfortunate and ill-chosen words—in such a manner as totally to pervert their meaning, and to leave on the mind of the reader of the *Athenæum* notice the false impression that Mr.

<sup>1</sup> It was the presence of the word *those* in the *Athenæum* quotation which led me to suspect that the reviewer had himself committed the sin of suppression with which he charges me.

Trollope considered the physical phenomena investigated by him at séances with Mr. Home to have occurred under circumstances which admitted the possibility of deception. The simple fact is—and if the reviewer read the whole of the letter from which he was quoting he must have known it to be a fact—that Mr. Trollope's expression of doubt did not apply to the *phenomena observed by him*, but to the *spirit-communications made*. I will cite the best witness to the fact—those few all-important words of his which the *Athenæum* reviewer omitted from the beginning of the passage quoted by him, in order to place on the remainder of the quotation a construction foreign to the truth:—

“*I have witnessed also many very surprising and extraordinary metaphysical manifestations.* But I cannot say that any of those have been such as wholly to exclude the possibility of their being deceptive,” &c.

Taken in conjunction with the passage of his letter quoted by me in my former work, the mental attitude of Mr. Trollope becomes intelligible. “My testimony,” he wrote to the *Athenæum*, “is this: I have seen and felt *physical facts* wholly and utterly inexplicable, as I believe, by any known and generally received physical laws. I unhesitatingly reject the theory which considers such facts to be produced by means familiar to the best professors of legerdemain.”

Even the *Athenæum* reviewer will probably admit, in face of the above evidence, that it is he, and not I, who must be found guilty of misrepresenting the statements of Mr. Trollope, and that the well-known author was fully convinced of the genuineness of the *phenomena* witnessed by him in Home's presence, while expressing doubt as to the origin of the *communications* received. I claimed no more than this. There is not a word in my former work to support the assertion of its *Athenæum* critic that I cited Mr. Trollope as a Spiritualist, nor is there a word in the two volumes of “Incidents in My Life” which bears out his declaration, that “In the ‘Incidents of My Life’ Home claimed the



late T. A. Trollope as a convert to Spiritualism." (This passage affords an instructive measure of my critic's accuracy. Mr. T. A. Trollope was still on earth when the reviewer wrote.)

My object is not to discuss the theories of this or that person, whether they be spiritual, psychical, or sceptical, but to collect and give to the world all obtainable *facts* concerning the life and mission of D. D. Home. In what light the witnesses of those facts regarded them is immaterial to me; my only concern is with the facts themselves. If I have dealt at some length with the misstatements of the *Athenæum*, it is not with any intention of discussing the metaphysical theories of Mr. Trollope, but merely in order to set the facts of the case in their true light.

I leave the last words in the matter to be spoken by Mr. T. A. Trollope himself. On the 29th of December, 1869, nearly seven years after the date of his letter to the *Athenæum*, he wrote as follows to the Secretary of the London Dialectical Society:—

"I may also mention that Bosco, one of the greatest professors of legerdemain ever known, in a conversation with me upon the subject, utterly scouted the idea of the possibility of such phenomena as I saw produced by Mr. Home being performed by any of the resources of his art. To what sort of agency these results are to be attributed I have no idea, and give no opinion; although (inasmuch as I consider that the word 'supernatural'<sup>1</sup> involves a contradiction in terms) I hold that to admit that the phenomena exist implies the admission that they are 'natural' or in accordance with some law of nature. With regard to the *metaphysical* phenomena, though I have witnessed many strange things, I have never known any that satisfactorily excluded the *possibility* of mistake or imposture."

How different this reservation from the sentiments which the *Athenæum* reviewer attributed to Mr. Trollope! It is plain that the latter had not departed one iota in the course of fourteen years from the conviction which he so emphatically expressed in 1855, *apropos* of the Brewster controversy:—

"I should not do all that duty, I think, requires of

<sup>1</sup> One may be a Spiritualist and yet agree on this point with Mr. Trollope.

me in this case, were I to conclude without stating, very solemnly, that after very many opportunities of witnessing and investigating the phenomena caused by, or happening to Mr. Home, I am wholly convinced that, be what may their origin, and cause, and nature, they are not produced by any fraud, machinery, juggling, illusion, or trickery on his part."

These words are quoted on page 39 of my former volume. The *Athenæum* reviewer, therefore, had them before him when he made the very singular mistake of citing Mr. Trollope as denying in the latter part of his 1863 letter that which he had emphatically asserted in the beginning of it, and still more emphatically in his published testimony of 1855.

Even had the reviewer been as accurate in his statements as he was disingenuously the reverse, he would only have succeeded in proving that Mr. Trollope was given to changing his mind. According to the *Athenæum*, he made a declaration of belief in 1855, which he partly retracted in 1863, and fully reasserted in 1869. Would these fluctuations of opinion have been evidence against the *bona fides* of Mr. Home? The reviewer seems to think so, his logic being of a piece with his accuracy of statement.

I have now shown clearly that Mr. Trollope's testimony never varied. His position was that of Sir Edwin Arnold and Mr. Buckle; he testified to the occurrence of certain phenomena outside the domain of *known* physical laws, and inexplicable on any theory of illusion or deception. All beyond is darkness to him. That darkness would have become light, however, had he been favoured with such tokens of spirit-identity as are described by numerous witnesses in my former volume.

Mr. Trollope's mother—a lady who achieved considerable literary celebrity in her day—was an investigator at the same time with himself. She came from Italy in the summer of 1855 expressly to see Home, was present at several séances in the house of the Rymers at Ealing, and on leaving England pressed Home to pay her a visit

in Florence. If Mr. B. Coleman, who was present with her at the Ealing séances, bears accurate witness, Mrs. Trollope's spiritual convictions went much further than that recognition of the reality of the phenomena to which the testimony of her son is limited. Mr. Coleman stated to the Dialectical Society in 1869 that he had received a letter from Mrs. Trollope, while Mr. Home was her guest at Florence, in which she wrote "that she had received, when Home was with her, almost daily evidence of the presence of the spirits of her family."

It is not worth while to deal at length with the remaining misstatements of my *Athenæum* critic. I will briefly notice a few of the more important:—

It is incorrect that I claimed the late Mr. John Bright as "a convert to Spiritualism." I merely related the circumstances of his acquaintance with Mr. Home, and gave the evidence of Mrs. Senior, Mrs. Hall, &c., concerning the phenomena that he witnessed and the opinions he expressed.

It is untrue that "nearly everybody of importance whose curiosity led him to take part in any of Home's séances appears to have been looked upon by him as a 'believer,' and to have exposed himself to the risk of being quoted as such for advertising purposes." The effrontery of this assertion is really astonishing. Not a name is given in either volume of "Incidents in My Life" which Home had not received full permission to print; and nothing has rendered it more difficult for me to collect and chronicle the facts of his life than the extreme and Quixotic delicacy which he invariably showed in suppressing the names of the many who were afraid to declare to the world the belief they had declared in private. I need not cite proofs of this self-sacrificing reserve; they abound in every chapter of my former volume.

It is not true that Lord Brougham and Sir David Brewster "brought on themselves much abuse by their scepticism." Sir D. Brewster, like the reviewer, misrepresented facts, and was convicted out of his own

mouth of doing so. Lord Brougham never *publicly* declared either scepticism or belief; and not a word against him was ever written or spoken by Mr. Home.

It is ridiculously untrue that "at ordinary séances, where novices were present, he" (Home) "generally contented himself with table-turning and spirit-rapping." The mass of evidence I have collected proves that every manifestation ever beheld at the séances of Home was as frequently witnessed by sceptics as believers.

There is one statement in Mr. Trollope's letter of the year 1863 to the *Athenæum*, which should either not have been made at all, or should have been accompanied with full details of the occurrence to which he refers. He writes, that at Florence, on one occasion, Mr. Home requested him to withdraw from a séance and absent himself for the future, in consequence of his "having expressed doubt and incredulity respecting a certain manifestation." This is so unlike Home, that I can only explain the incident on the supposition that Mr. Trollope's doubts were offensively expressed. No man had a higher sense of self-respect than Home; and he justly conceived that, although incredulity concerning the phenomena of Spiritualism was no reason for excluding a person from his séances, the insulting expression of that incredulity was a very good one. For the sake of the truth he was ready to submit to much, but not to insult. When Professor Tyndall put forth a challenge in offensive terms, Home refused to meet him. When Mr. Crookes, with equal incredulity but more courtesy, requested opportunities to investigate the manifestations, Home at once conceded them; and a lengthy and searching inquiry ended in the conversion of the man of science, instead of the anticipated discomfiture of the spirits.

I will select another instance from my present chapter. The *Athenæum* reviewer will probably concede that Mr. Buckle was a more incredulous inquirer than Mr. Trollope, and a man better fitted by his intellectual powers and habits of thought for the investigation of

the phenomena of Spiritualism. Yet Mr. Buckle's own words show that Home was not only willing but most desirous to afford him every opportunity for testing the reality of what he witnessed, and pressed him to search out to the uttermost the truth of the matter, and announce to the world the conclusions at which he arrived. If Mr. Buckle's illness and death had not unfortunately supervened, the *Athenæum* and other English journals would probably now be wondering in the case of Mr. Buckle, as in that of Mr. Crookes, that so able a man should have believed the testimony of his senses and his reason.

In dealing with the séances of Home, the majority of journals have always adopted the tactics of the special pleader, instead of the impartiality of the judge. The testimony of the most distinguished investigators is ridiculed and their capacity decried. There can be no better case in point than that of Mr. Crookes. When he announced his intention of investigating Spiritualism, one English journal after another hastened to confer on him a printed certificate of fitness for his task. Had his many séances with Mr. Home left him as incredulous as they found him, that certificate would be his to this day; but he returned another verdict than that which had been so confidently anticipated, and the journals which had extolled the scientific ability of Mr. Crookes at the outset of his inquiry were equally prompt to decry it at the close.

On every occasion when an investigator of intellectual or social celebrity had the boldness to bear public testimony to the facts he had observed at séances with Home, the press hastened to overwhelm him with ridicule and abuse. Can it be wondered at that the persons candid and courageous enough to declare their experiences and convictions to the world were few indeed, in comparison with the host who have been silent?

In the English literary world the number of timid converts to Spiritualism was especially large, in comparison with that of declared adherents to the cause. The

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courageous examples of Mrs. S. C. Hall and of William and Mary Howitt failed to inspire other men and women of letters with the resolution to follow their example. Lord Lytton was dumb and timorous to the last, Robert Chambers spoke only to his friends, Robert Bell contented himself with the publication of an anonymous article in the *Cornhill Magazine*, and Thackeray with endorsing the good faith of the writer. These four all recognised the phenomena as facts; and two at least of the number believed in their spiritual origin, as did Mrs. Browning and Miss Catherine Sinclair, among English women of letters. Mr. E. L. Blanchard was present at numerous séances with Home; and since writing my former work I have learned that he placed his attestation of the phenomena on record. Miss Geraldine Jewsbury, the once celebrated novelist, witnessed various manifestations; but the only evidence I have of the impression produced on her is contained in a letter written by her friend Mrs. S. C. Hall. In my former volume I have brought together, as far as was in my power, the facts relating to Mr. Ruskin's investigations of Spiritualism. That they resulted in his conversion was declared by Mrs. Hall, and is certainly my own impression; but my object in stating what I knew of his experiences was not to discuss the interpretation he placed on the phenomena he witnessed, but to prove that, like Buckle, Arnold, Trollope, Chambers, Bell, Thackeray, Lytton, Blanchard, and a score of other writers more or less celebrated, he investigated the manifestations which occurred in the presence of Home, and found them to be *facts*.

Mr. Ruskin has never published any account of the séances at which he was present with Mr. Home; and a request that he would furnish particulars of them—made at the time of writing my former volume—remained without result. I have since discovered in the *Spiritual Magazine* for September, 1872, an article by that well-known writer, and equally well-known Spiritualist, William Howitt, entitled "Some Séances

with Mr. Home Some Years Ago." Mr. Howitt gives the following account of a manifestation especially directed to Mr. Ruskin. It occurred at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, widow of Professor Gregory of Edinburgh.

"Another séance," writes Mr. Howitt, "took place at Mrs. Gregory's in Grafton Place, Bond Street. As I recollect, there were present at it Ladies Paulett and Gomm, Mrs. Cowper, Home, Ruskin, Mr. Ellis (a clergyman), Colonel (then Captain) Drayson, Mrs. Howitt and myself, and our hostess."

Mr. Howitt then proceeds to describe the earlier phenomena of the séance; but as they were similar to many recorded in this and my former work, I omit his account of them, and come at once to the portion of his narrative which relates to Mr. Ruskin. It appears that Mr. Home had recited a poem claimed to have been given by the spirit of Southey through an American writing-medium in the early days of the Spiritual movement. Home would seem to have admired this composition; for, in addition to reciting it at Mrs. Gregory's séance, I find that he read it in public on the occasion of his 1866 lecture on Spiritualism. It may be found in "Sights and Sounds," a work on Spiritualism written by an English man of letters, Mr. Henry Spicer—another dumb witness of facts associated with the séances of Home. Mr. Spicer thinks that "the muse of Robert Southey was unequal, at least while in this state of being, to the production of anything so beautiful and touching." I quote the first verse:—

"Night overtook me ere my race was run,  
 And mind, which is the chariot of the soul,  
 Whose wheels revolve in radiance like the sun,  
 And utter glorious music, as they roll  
 To the eternal goal,  
 With sudden shock stood still. She heard the boom  
 Of thunders; many cataracts seemed to pour  
 From the invisible mountains; through the gloom  
 Flowed the great waters; then I knew no more  
 But this, that thought was o'er."

"At the conclusion of the recitation," writes Mr. Howitt, "Mr. Ruskin asked whether he should recite a poem, and he was begged to do so. Whose the poem was I do not know, but it began with words to this effect: 'O Christ, save my soul, if Thou think'st it worth the saving.'"

Mr. Howitt, I should note, explains that, while Home was reciting the poem attributed to the spirit of Southey, the table "seemed to beat time to the rhythm" with the feet nearest to him.

"As Mr. Ruskin," he writes, "commenced his recitation, the table reversed its action. Mr. Ruskin sat on the opposite side to Mr. Home; and the table, rising on the opposite feet, beat time to the rhythm of this poem, too. When it had ceased, I asked whether any one had noticed a peculiar beating of the time, besides that of the table-feet, namely, one with a metallic sound, as of a small bar of steel struck upon metal. 'Yes,' said Mr. Ruskin at once, 'I know the meaning of that sound. It is descriptive of the state of my mind when I committed that poem to memory—when the earth was as iron and the heavens were as brass to me.'"

This slight but singular manifestation must have been of peculiar interest to Mr. Ruskin. How was Mr. Home to read in his mind the recollection of a period of mental strife and suffering associated with the verses the great writer was repeating? It seems to me, too, that Mr. Ruskin's words, as given by Mr. Howitt, *imply*, although they do not distinctly *declare*, the faith I believe him to have held.<sup>1</sup>

It is hardly necessary to prove here that William and Mary Howitt were Spiritualists. They both de-

<sup>1</sup> "Mrs. Home," says the *Athenæum* reviewer, "claims Mr. Ruskin as a convert to Spiritualism." If he had taken the trouble to look at pages 138-9 of my former work, he would have found me writing as follows:—

"Among the investigators present at séances of Mr. Home in England were certain distinguished persons, of whom I have warrant for stating that they acknowledged the phenomena they had witnessed at those séances to be inexplicable on the theory of imposture, but of whose beliefs or opinions—if they formed any—I cannot with certainty speak. I refer, among others, to Mr. Ruskin."



clared openly that faith which, once acquired, they held fast to the end. Disgust with rank impostures that usurped the name of Spiritualism did, indeed, finally impel both husband and wife to withdraw from all public association with the cause so dear to them, and after fifteen years of vigorous warfare in its behalf, their pens were laid aside and their voices were silent; but they retained to the last their old belief, unweakened and unwavering.<sup>1</sup>

Among the many manifestations witnessed by the Howitts in the presence of Home, there was one that had a very impressive sequel. In a letter of Mrs. Mary Howitt to Mr. Home, dated April 26, 1862, I find the following passage:—

“Tell your dear Sacha” (Mrs. Home) “that the spray of geranium spiritually given to me through her hand lives and flourishes, and is now a large plant, which, I hope, will be beautifully in flower in the course of the summer.”

This passage refers to a manifestation witnessed by Mr. and Mrs. Howitt in the summer of the preceding year. Count Steinbock-Fermor and Mr. and Mrs. W. Wilkinson were also present at the séance in question—one of the many held in 1861 at 7, Cornwall Terrace, Regent's Park, while Mr. and Mrs. Home were staying there with Mrs. Parkes. I have given in my former work (pp. 164 and 165) the testimony of two witnesses concerning the principal incidents of the séance, and will only quote here so much of Mr. Howitt's narrative in the *Spiritual Magazine* as relates to the giving of the geranium spray:—

“Mrs. Home asked the spirits to give, through her, some small thing or other to each of the persons present, as a souvenir of the occasion. Immediately flowers were put into her hand by the spirits, which she handed to her friends sitting round the table. Nobody

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<sup>1</sup> “As to the fact of Spiritualism, and the grand importance of the establishment of the reality of spirit-life, there can be no question about them, and they must be the solid comfort of every thinking man; but what ridiculous and mischievous stuff we see imported into the movement every day!”—Letter of William Howitt to Home, in the spring of 1876.

saw the flowers or sprigs of plants come, with one exception—a carnation that flew across the room from a vase of cut flowers in a far corner, and fell before Mrs. Wilkinson.

“To Mrs. Howitt had been given a sprig of the cut-leaved geranium, so common in bouquets on account of its scent.”

This desire that the spirits would carry flowers for her to her friends was frequently expressed by Mrs. Home. “One of her pleasures,” wrote Mrs. S. C. Hall (“Incidents,” vol. i. p. 220), “was tying up little bouquets of flowers with one of her long, dark hairs, flinging a bouquet under or on the table, or into the room, and expressing a wish that a spirit would give it to one or other of her friends. This was invariably done.”

Mr. Wilkinson<sup>1</sup> confirms the testimony of Mr. Howitt:—

“Some flowers,” he writes (“Incidents,” p. 187), “were brought from the shrine” (on which Mrs. Parkes’ collection of Indian idols stood), “and placed in the hand of each person present. Our present consisted of a rose and several pinks.”

Mrs. Howitt, as her letter shows, took home the spray of geranium given to her, and planted it. In his article in the *Spiritual Magazine* of September, 1872, her husband thus describes the sequel of her action:—

“This” (the séance already described at which Mr. Ruskin was present) “was a very remarkable séance, but it led to one still more remarkable—one connected with the spray of geranium, now become a bush. As we were about to take leave, Mr. Home said, ‘I am coming up to Highgate on the 7th of July.’ I said, ‘But we shall not be in town then.’ ‘Yes, you will,’ he replied, ‘or the spirits would not send me.’ ‘Very well,’ I said; ‘if we are at home—which I don’t believe—we shall be glad to see you.’ However, something had prevented our leaving town as we had fixed; and duly, in the evening of the 7th of July, Mr. Home made his appearance, accompanied by Mrs. Cowper and Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Wilkinson.”

Mr. Howitt, although an author by profession, seems

<sup>1</sup> Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, of Lincoln’s Inn Fields.

to have set little store by that useful article, a date; for, throughout his narrative, he omits to indicate with anything resembling precision the years in which the events that he is describing occurred. As regards the séance in July, I am enabled to fix its date with some approach to certainty, by the help of the following facts. Mr. Howitt states that it took place soon after the séance at which Mr. Ruskin was present. Mr. Ruskin's acquaintance with Mr. Home began in the year 1864. It seems likely, therefore, that July, 1864, was the date of Mr. Home's visit to Highgate. In the month of July, two years before, Mrs. Home had passed from earth; and the beautiful opening manifestations of this séance with the Howitts were now associated with her presence. Mr. Howitt thus narrates them:—

“On entering the room where tea was set out, Mr. Home noticed the bush of geranium, which was placed in its pot in the centre of the table. I do not think any one had mentioned the growth of this plant to him, and we meant to surprise him by it. But he said immediately, ‘Ah! I see that is the geranium that you planted after the séance at Mrs. Parkes.’ ‘How do you know that?’ we asked. ‘Because,’ he said, ‘I see starry lights all about it.’

“During tea this bush was shaken by invisible hands so strongly that it diffused the odour of it throughout the room. I believe the day was the anniversary of the decease of Mrs. Home. After tea, we adjourned to the library, the next room—lying at an angle with this room, but with a wide-open doorway. Mr. Home pushed a round table near to a window looking into the garden; the geranium in its pot was placed in the centre of this table. Immediately Mrs. Howitt asked that sprigs of this geranium might be broken off by the spirits, and one presented to each of the persons present. Assent was instantly rapped out; and we all saw the branches of the shrub bent down on different sides as by invisible hands endeavouring to break sprigs from them. Mr. Home, Mr. Wilkinson, and Mrs. Howitt all declared that they saw two beautiful hands and arms, as belonging to a lady, but seeming as of alabaster internally suffused with light. The rest of us only saw the agitation of the shrub. The hands were supposed to be those of Mrs. Home.

“As there was a strong evening light coming directly through the window from the west, the attempt to break the shrub did not succeed; and at once the pot and its bush rose from the table, and descended between it and the window-seat, where there was deep shadow. We then heard the boughs of the shrub snapping and

cracking, but unsuccessfully. I said, 'Ah! I see you don't know everything in that world of yours. You must slip off the sprigs at the joints.' The advice was immediately adopted, and one after another sprigs of the geranium, nicely slipped off, were put up to the rim of the table by a hand, and were distributed to the several persons present."

Mr. Howitt does not inform us whether the hand was seen by all the circle, or was again invisible to some of the persons present. It was one of the characteristics of these apparitions that they varied greatly in the distinctness with which they presented themselves to the gaze of the various beholders. One witness would see only a flower or other object in motion, a second a luminous cloud hovering over it, while to a third that cloud would assume the shape of a perfectly formed hand.<sup>1</sup>

The hand vanished; the alphabet was called for by the customary five raps, and a message given. "Mrs. Cowper said," writes Mr. Howitt, "that the spirit was that of her nephew, then about six months departed to the spirit-life."

Mrs. Cowper—now Lady Mount Temple—like her sister-in-law Lady Jocelyn and her friend Lady Londonderry, was one of the believers in Spiritualism who refrained from giving publicity to the convictions impressed on them by séances with Home.

"Am I too bold," Mrs. Cowper writes to him on one occasion, "in asking whether it would be possible to bring a sister—one who is deeply interested in the subject? *I feel now no interest, except in the spirit-world.*"

"I was up till very late," she tells Mr. Home after another séance, "thinking over and writing an account of the wonders of the evening." What those wonders were, Mrs. Cowper unfortunately does not say.

I return to the narrative of Mr. Howitt:—

"The table," he writes, "rose from the floor, and was suddenly turned with its top perpendicular, and facing the window—the large flower-pot and its projecting bush remaining as if screwed to the sur-

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<sup>1</sup> See page 347 in my former work.

face, and two gold rings which had been laid on the table also remaining as if made fast to the surface. This was surprising enough; but to enhance the wonder, the table in this position was jerked forward, as if with the intention of pitching the flower-pot and its contents through the window. All, however, remained fast and unmoved; and the table was then turned four different ways, with the top perpendicular and the same jerk each time repeated. Then the original position of the table was resumed, and it was gently let down to the floor.

"Scarcely, however, was this effected, when the table once more rose up, and this time so high that only Mr. Wilkinson could reach its top. The rest of us were entreated to hold it by the feet; and in this manner it suddenly and rapidly sailed away into the next room, and placed itself over the table on which we had taken tea. There it remained; and I observed: 'I suppose the spirits are resting themselves by setting the volant table on the other;' but on feeling at the feet we found them at least two inches above the surface of the tea-table. *The table with the flower-pot upon it was, in fact, suspended in the air*, where it remained some minutes, and then as suddenly, and more rapidly, sailed back again to the library, leaving me sticking between the tea-table and a sofa, and only able to hurry after it to see it depositing itself in the middle of the room in the most easy manner.

"Here we assembled round it in a state of astonishment which may be imagined, but our wonder was not at an end. As we thus stood, we observed the chairs from the different sides of the room, as if self-moved, advancing towards the table. An easy-chair on castors came very blithely bowling along, and the rest glid over the carpet like automatic or spirit-instinct ones.

"Having seated ourselves on the chairs thus politely handed by the invisibles, a book was suddenly put over a lady's shoulder, which, being opened, proved to be one of Captain Marryatt's stories, with a leaf turned down somewhere in *Jacob Faithful*. Wondering for what purpose such a book could be selected by the spirits:—'Oh,' said Mrs. Cowper, 'that is George again. Captain Marryatt was, of all authors, his favourite. No doubt the leaf is turned down at some incident that has greatly amused him.' The book had been taken from a shelf behind, in which the books were particularly tightly wedged. It was put back to be examined at leisure; but it was found the next day, on referring to it, that the folded leaf had been again put straight.

"It was now announced by the spirits that the séance was at an end. Several of the party heard, as it were, a bird whistling near the ceiling, and all was over."

It seems probable that this interesting séance was really held a few days earlier than the date given by Mr. Howitt, when writing from memory several years

afterwards; so that, instead of July 7th, it may, in fact, have taken place on the anniversary of the passing away of Mrs. Home—July 3rd. A letter from Mrs. Mary Howitt to Mr. Home, with the date of “July 6th,” is now before me, and evidently refers to this very séance. She writes:—

“A very singular circumstance with regard to the book which was brought, I must mention to you. You remember that a leaf was turned down, and when I replaced the volume in the shelves, I said I would look the next morning to what this referred—if anything. But I could find no leaf turned down; and it was only by going carefully page by page through the book that I could find it. It had been again straightened, and only a faint crease remained to show that it had been folded. This is strange, is it not? The spirit must have unfolded it as I put in on the shelf. With kindest regards, I am, dear friend,—Yours ever,  
MARY HOWITT.”

In the *Spiritual Magazine* for January, 1874, Mr. Howitt chronicles one more of the many séances at which he had been present with Mr. Home. He says that he selected it for description on account of the curious and somewhat uncommon nature of the phenomena that were witnessed. Interesting as they are, the account of some of the tokens of spirit-identity that must have dwelt within the recollection of Mr. Howitt (as instanced by him in the case of Mrs. Cowper) would have been still more welcome.

The séance was held at the house of Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, in addition to whom “there were present,” says Mr. Howitt, “Miss Emma Hardinge and her mother, Mrs. Howitt and myself. It was a summer evening, and we sat together in the sobered daylight.”

Passing rapidly over the earlier phenomena of the séance, Mr. Howitt describes at some length the remarkable manifestations which ensued:—

“The heavy embroidered cover of the table,” he writes, “began to rise in the centre as if some one had taken it up by a thumb and finger, and it was drawn up till it appeared like a tent pitched upon the table. Having remained there some time, it was lifted quite away above our heads, and was carried through the air and deposited in the other half of the drawing-room, of which the folding-doors were open.”

The drawing-room in which the party sat was lighted by a large window, divided by pilasters into three, and hung with double muslin curtains.

"Suddenly," says Mr. Howitt, "we saw one of the light muslin curtains lifted at the bottom, as by unseen hands, and advancing towards us steadily and regularly—without any agitation or flutter. On it came, tight and fully expanded, and was borne over the heads of that part of the company seated with their backs to the window. . . . No sooner was this curtain thus stretched out than the two others, right and left of it, went exactly through the same process, their ends being laid over each other on the table, but with the greatest skill and regularity. This was wonderful enough ; but now the under-curtains began to move, the centre one first. It was carried in the same regular manner—with a motion more like a growing out into the room than a being carried out, so silently, gently, and progressively was it done—being carried quite under the front curtains upon the table, without even seeming in the least to disturb them. The whole of the three under-curtains were then stretched, and remained thus for some time ; every one having the opportunity of feeling them, and wondering at their tense firmness and even elasticity. After a time these curtains were again withdrawn in the same order, and with the same perfectly smooth and steady motion, and returned to their places as before.

"There were other curious manifestations and communications at this séance ; but I record these as perfectly unique, so far as my experience has gone."

Incomplete and hastily-written as are the reminiscences of Mr. William Howitt which I have disinterred from the *Spiritual Magazine*, they possess, as will be seen, considerable value, and redeem him from the reproach common to nine-tenths of the friends of Home, that they have done nothing to preserve the memory of the wondrous facts which it was in their power to attest. Mrs. S. C. Hall is another witness whose pen has borne valuable testimony, as my former volume showed. I cannot say as much for her husband ; few Englishmen saw more of the manifestations associated with Home, and few have done less to perpetuate a record of them. His letters to Home during a quarter of a century abound, indeed, with enthusiastic declarations of his faith, joy, hope, affection—of every attribute, in short, that a Spiritualist could wish to possess.

Thus, writing in May, 1866, when Mr. Home was very ill at Malvern, Mr. Hall says:—

“We are very anxious about you: earnestly praying God that of His goodness and mercy He will continue your mission on earth. There would seem to us a dismal blank if you were removed, and I trust we may not be so afflicted. . . . Just now I think the look of a friend’s writing will be like a friend’s voice—pleasant to you; and I write you these few lines in the hope they may cheer you, when added to those of many you will receive from loving friends. It is needless to say to you that we claim to rank among the most affectionate of your friends—who have loved you and had faith in you from the day we saw you first.

“May God of His great mercy restore you to health, and continue you yet awhile to discharge the high and holy mission with which you have been entrusted.”

Again, on March 20, 1869—Home’s birthday—the same correspondent writes to him:—

“May God bless you this day, and all days of your life: still more endearing you to your many friends: and you have many who esteem, love, and—what is of even greater value—respect you. Among them I know you count us—who, after an intimate and close knowledge of ten years, regard you with feelings of warm affection.—Your attached friend,  
S. C. HALL.”

“You have kept our friendship and affection for about twelve years, without losing it for one hour,” says Mr. Hall in 1871:—and I might go on from year to year quoting similar expressions, were it worth while to encumber my pages with them. A well-attested and clearly-written description of even a single séance with Mr. Home would have been worth them all.

Mr. E. L. Blanchard does not seem to have recorded any of the numerous manifestations that he witnessed, but his sworn testimony to the impression they produced on him is now before me. It takes the form of a short affidavit sent to the Dialectical Society on April 15, 1869, wherein, “the deponent” (Mr. Blanchard) “states that he has had the gratification of attending circles when Mr. D. D. Home was the medium, and that he has become perfectly convinced of the genuine nature of the phenomena occurring on those occasions.”



Mr. Robert Bell's testimony to his experiences with Home is given in my former work, in the shape of lengthy extracts from Bell's article, "Stranger than Fiction," which created such a stir in English literary circles on its appearance in the *Cornhill Magazine* of August, 1860. Of the great writer who then edited the *Cornhill*, I have said what little was in my power to say. All record of Thackeray's séances with Home seems to be lost; but the publication of Bell's article, and the brief introduction that he prefixed to it, bear witness to the impression they produced on him. On at least one occasion Thackeray gave public expression to his convictions. At a dinner in London, shortly after the appearance of "Stranger than Fiction," he was attacked for having permitted the publication of such an article in the *Cornhill*. Thackeray, says Mr. Weld, in his "Last Winter in Rome," listened quietly to his critics, and then replied:—"It is all very well for you, who have probably never seen any spiritual manifestations, to talk as you do; but had you seen what I have witnessed, you would hold a different opinion."

I quoted in my former volume so much of Mr. Weld's testimony as was given in Mr. Wallace's "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism," but, as in the case of Mr. Trollope's letter to the *Athenæum*, I missed what I would otherwise have included. On consulting Mr. Weld at first hand, I find that he adds:—

"Whether Mr. Thackeray thought differently before he died, I cannot say; but this I know, that every possible argument was used by those present to shake his faith in the spiritual manifestations of Mr. Home."

The avowal, therefore, of such faith was made by Thackeray at the dinner in question. The more the pity that the great author never had the courage to publish it to his readers, and to relate to them at the same time the particulars of the manifestations which had forced conviction upon so incredulous a mind.

As stated in my former work, Robert Chambers wrote the Introduction and concluding chapter which

appear in Mr. Home's first volume of "Incidents," but was unwilling to sign his name to them. I need not recapitulate here the evidence brought together in "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission" (pp. 147-152), concerning Chambers' séances with Home, and consequent conversion from materialism to Spiritualism. That his conversion was complete was no secret to his friends, as witness the following testimony from a gentleman who knew him well, and who was not a Spiritualist:—

"A little work lies before me entitled *The Scientific Aspect of the Supernatural*, &c., in which the fullest belief in Spiritualism is set forth, and along with this a conviction of its profound religious importance. The late Dr. Robert Chambers gave it to Dr. Findlater" (editor of *Chambers' Cyclopædia*), "with some dim view of making a convert of him. *Dr. Chambers' belief was entire and earnest in the reality of these spiritual communications*; yet nobody ever suspected him of being either knave or fool." ("Spiritualism: A Narrative with a Discussion, by P. P. Alexander, M.A.")

On the occasion of the Lyon lawsuit, Dr. Chambers honourably came forward to bear testimony in behalf of his friend. I was mistaken in saying in my former volume that he gave his affidavit at Home's request. The action of Dr. Chambers was spontaneous, as appears from a letter of his dated St. Andrews, August 2, 1867:—

"This reverse of your late apparent good fortune," writes Chambers, "and the distress you tell me you are in, excite my warmest sympathy, for I know your innocence, and can only attribute Mrs. Lyon's conduct to a temporary derangement of mind. I have a distinct recollection of meeting you early in last December and congratulating you on your good fortune, when you took me to Mrs. Lyon's house and introduced me to her. I found her, to all appearance, a sensible and considerate person; and, referring to what she had recently done for you, I congratulated her on having bestowed her money and her affections on a person whom I knew to be worthy of both. . . .

"P.S.—I am willing to put my recollections into the form of an affidavit, if you inform me of the required style."

A letter from Miss Geraldine Jewsbury fixes the date of her introduction to Home as prior to the year 1865. If her friend Mrs. Hall is correct, Miss Jewsbury

bury was more impressed by what she saw at séances with Home than she cared to avow. "Geraldine Jewsbury has just returned to town," writes Mrs. Hall to him on March 5, 1865. "She is at heart a believer, but not sound yet—she cannot withstand *quizz*, and fears being laughed at."

From another letter of Mrs. Hall's I learn, that on one occasion, when Miss Jewsbury was included in the circle, Mr. Hain Friswell, author of "The Gentle Life," was present for the first time at a séance with Home. He appeared some years later before the Dialectical Society, and made an emphatic declaration of his recognition of the facts of Spiritualism—at the same time attributing a demoniacal origin to the phenomena he had witnessed. Mr. Friswell could render reasons for his conviction that the manifestations were genuine, but in support of his theory of their origin he had none to give.

The next name that I have to mention takes me back to days when some of the most ignorant and furious attacks ever directed against Spiritualism and Spiritualists were published by the late Mr. Dickens in his well-known periodical. The clever novelist who presided over *All the Year Round* knew absolutely nothing of Home or the séances of Home. It does not seem that he ever exchanged a word with the first, and he certainly never was present at any of the second. His means for forming an opinion probably consisted of second-hand fables picked out of *Sludge the Medium* and other such unreliable authorities. With taste as bad as the verse of Sludge, *All the Year Round* continued from year to year to publish attacks and insinuations directed against Mr. Home, in support of which it had not a particle of evidence to offer. Yet the late Mr. Dickens, even while most violent in his fulminations against spirits, could not only allow his journal to present a ghost or two to its readers, but to *warrant them genuine*. In *All the Year Round* for October 5, 1861, appeared "Mr. H——'s Own Nar-

rative," attested by the writer to be the correct account of a ghost-experience of his which had been inaccurately related by another of Mr. Dickens' contributors, in a previous number of the periodical.

The "Mr. H——" of the startling chapter of autobiography published in *All the Year Round* was the gentleman of whom Mrs. Hall wrote to Home in the same year, 1861:—"Mr. Heaphy called here last night, and I do rejoice at the change wrought in his mind through your means. Sometimes, even now, his spirit rises against conviction; and then again it is brought right by the *wonders* he has seen, *the marvelous information* you gave him."

If Mr. Dickens could not condescend to examine into the truth of Spiritualism for himself, he might profitably have acquainted himself with the experiences of others who had done so, and, in especial, have applied for enlightenment of his ignorance to his contributor Mr. Heaphy.

"All who are interested in Spiritualism," wrote Mr. B. Coleman of Pembroke Villas, Bayswater, in the *Spiritual Magazine* for December, 1862, "have, no doubt, read 'Mr. H——'s Narrative,' which appeared a few months past in *All the Year Round*, and in the *Spiritual Magazine* for December last. I have the pleasure of being acquainted with the writer, Mr. H——, who is well known in the literary circles of London, and is an artist of considerable celebrity. . . . In August last I received a letter from Mr. H——, in which he informed me that since we last met he had seen a good deal of Spiritualism. He had made the acquaintance of Mr. Home, and with him and other mediums in private life he had had a large amount of evidence, which went far to satisfy his scruples."

From the letters of Mr. Heaphy, it is apparent that the acquaintance thus begun continued over a number of years. He painted the portrait of Mrs. Home, offered suggestions during the progress of the "Incidents" ("I am very impatient to see you come before the world," he writes), and sent Home an introduction to the sculptor Gibson, on the occasion of his 1864 visit to Rome. In another letter, I find him requesting Home to allow Lady Milford to be present

at a séance "some time when you are in power." It is evident that he accepted the manifestations of that power as facts; but to him, as to Buckle and Trollope, they were probably inexplicable facts, for he appears to have offered no declared opinion concerning their cause.

The same may be said of Mr. Hamilton Aidé, who was present at séances of Home both in England and France, and of Mr. James Grant, editor of the *Morning Advertiser*, who, a complete stranger to Mr. Home, pressed on him in February, 1860, a request for séances, and obtained them. Mr. Lowe, editor of the *Critic*, intruded himself on the spirits about the same time as Mr. Grant, and writes to Home, February 27, 1860:—

"As I have been very greatly interested with what I have already seen of the Spiritual Manifestations, I hope the obstinacy of my scepticism will not influence the spirits to refuse to make any further attempts at my conversion. I feel that it will be long and hard work for me to adopt theories and opinions which so entirely militate against those upon which my mind has hitherto been nurtured and fed."

Lest the *Athenæum* should accuse me of claiming Mr. Lowe as a convert, I will add a few words of explanation respecting my reason for citing his and some other names. They serve as illustrations of the fact that, at the very time when the London press was most virulently assailing Mr. Home, numbers of its leading editors and journalists were eagerly seeking for invitations to his séances,<sup>1</sup> thus emulating the "Jedwood justice" of old Scottish story, which condemned first, and inquired into the justice of the sentence afterwards.

Mr. Gerald Massey, poet and journalist, has openly declared his faith in Spiritualism. The séances at which he was present with Home appear to have taken place during the years 1866–8; and some of them

<sup>1</sup> "Fancy my joy on Saturday night, at Lady Palmerston's, when Higgins (Jacob Omnium of the *Times*) and Hayward both asked me to be permitted to come to a séance. I told Robert Chambers, who called on Sunday, and he was greatly astonished and pleased. I had a conversation with Lord Dufferin, and promised to let him know as soon as you return."—Mrs. Milner Gibson, writing to Mr. Home.

were held in the house of Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall. In his little volume "Concerning Spiritualism," Mr. Massey relates in verse an incident from the life of Home. The little poem is entitled "A True Story," and narrates how one of the throng passing through a crowded London street saw, standing in the glare of a gin-palace, a ragged creature, who held out one hand to him for alms and supported a child with the other :—

"For the babe's sake he thrust a coin of gold  
 Into her hand, but it fell through and rolled  
 Ringing along the stones : he followed, found  
 It, brought it back, and looked around.  
 There was no woman waiting with her hand  
 Outstretch'd, no Child, where he had seen them stand :  
 In vain he searched each by-way round about.

"The truth is, he was one of those who see  
 At times side-glances of eternity.  
 The Beggar was a Spirit, doomed to plead  
 With hurrying wayfarers, who took no heed,  
 But passed her by, indifferent as the dead,  
 Till one should hear her voice and turn the head ;  
 Doomed to stand there and beg for bread, in tears,  
 To feed her child that had been dead for years.  
 This was the very spot where she had spent  
 Its life for drink, and this the punishment ;  
 Feeling she had let it slip into the grave,  
 And now would give eternal life to save :  
 Heartless, and deaf, and blind the world went by,  
 Until this Dreamer came, with seeing eye ;  
 The good Samaritan of souls had given,  
 And wrought the change that was to her as Heaven."

Under these verses, in his copy of the volume that contains them, Mr. Home wrote :—"The above is a 'True Story.' I am the man who saw the two spirits, and I told the fact to Gerald Massey.—D. D. HOME."

I have described in my former work the commencement and progress of Lord Lytton's investigations of Spiritualism, and have quoted, among other letters from the author of "Zanoni" and "A Strange Story," that in which he makes cautious and guarded acknowledgment to Home of "the extraordinary phenomena which

are elicited by your powers." I have also described Lord Lytton as being "in public an investigator of Spiritualism, in private a believer;" and I am not aware that any one has ventured to challenge the accuracy of that description. But the beliefs of the brilliant writer were of the same peculiar and fanciful order as his intellect. He publicly attested the existence of the phenomena, and in private attributed to them a spiritual origin; but, long before he met Home, his mind—or, rather, his imagination, had been coloured by superstitions derived from the mediæval and mystical authors in whom he delighted. He saw the facts of Spiritualism through a haze of fancies concerning sylphs, gnomes, "Dwellers on the Threshold," fiendish or angelic creatures compounded of fire or air, and capable, under imperfectly known conditions, of manifesting their presence to human beings. Mingled with these fancies were others more vague and shapeless, of magical effects that might be wrought on objects, both animate and inanimate, by the force of the human will. In that singular and powerful story which he contributed anonymously to *Blackwood's Magazine*, "The Haunters and the Haunted," Lytton has unintentionally furnished evidence, both of the extent to which he had been impressed by his séances with Home, and of the wild conjectures with which his romantic imagination busied itself concerning the agencies at work to produce the wonders he had witnessed. Half the phenomena described by the solitary watcher in the haunted house—the luminous form collapsing gradually into a vivid globule, the loud measured knocks at the bed-head, the vibrations of the floor, the grasp of an unseen hand, the hand emerging from under the table to seize the letters lying on it, the multitude of fiery sparks that flitted through the darkness—read like a transcript from Lord Lytton's private records of his séances with Home at Knebworth and in London. Various of the material phenomena of those séances have never been more graphically and

powerfully described than in "The Haunters and the Haunted;" but, even as a fiction, the *Blackwood* story was spoiled by the incoherent and unsatisfactory pages with which it originally closed. Lytton did wisely, in republishing it, to cut out the figure of the mesmerist-magician, and to leave the reader to the company of the haunted house and its sights and sounds, without attempting to set forth the extraordinary theory that phenomena similar to many which he had witnessed at the séances of Home might be produced by such an inadequate agent as the human will.

It is in "A Strange Story" and "The Haunted and the Haunters," rather than in his letter to the Dialectical Society, that we find the true Lytton—the man who saw in the facts of Spiritualism a confirmation of his fantasies concerning elementary spirits and latent forces of the will. The letter in question (February 28, 1869) is worded with all the reticence of a man who throughout life dreaded nothing so much as ridicule. Nevertheless, it contains a distinct recognition of the existence of certain phenomena,<sup>1</sup> "traceable to material influences of the nature of which we are ignorant;" and he who can read between the lines of Lord Lytton's cautious admissions will easily discern the nature of the writer's theories concerning their origin, and that they were such as I have termed them—confused and contradictory.

"So far as my experience goes," writes Lytton, "the phenomena, when freed from the impostures with which their exhibition abounds and examined rationally, are traceable to material influences of the nature of which we are ignorant. They require certain physical organisations or temperaments to produce them, and vary according to those organisations or temperaments. Hence Albertus Magnus says that a man must be born a magician, *i.e.*, born with certain physical idiosyncrasies which no study can acquire."<sup>2</sup>

"In those constitutional idiosyncrasies, whether the phenomena exhibited through or by them be classed under the name of clair-

<sup>1</sup> Too distinct for even the *Athenæum* to charge me with inaccuracy, I would have added, if the admission of the existence of these same *material phenomena* had not been quite as distinct and emphatic in the case of Mr. T. A. Trollope.

<sup>2</sup> So says the Spiritualist.



voyance, spirit manifestation, or witchcraft, I have invariably found a marked comparative preponderance of the electric fluid, and the phenomena are more or less striking in proportion to the electricity of the atmosphere.<sup>1</sup> . . .

"I should say that, if any number of sound-thinking persons wish to investigate these phenomena, they should commence by dismissing all preconceived judgments, and in a temper utterly free from credulity, and, above all, be very careful not to jump to the conclusion that spirits of another world are concerned in the matter. . . . Natural agencies are apparent in all the phenomena (at least so far as I have witnessed them) ascribed to spirits.<sup>2</sup>

"If matter be moved from one end of the room to the other, it must be by a material agency—though it may be as invisible as an electric or odic fluid—and the matter of a human brain is always needed to convey any impression to the auditor or spectator.

"LYTTON."

This last passage of Lord Lytton's letter might have been prefixed to "The Haunted and the Haunters," but, like that singular story in its original form, it irritates the reader with an explanation by which nothing is explained. This mysterious "agency—material, though it may be as invisible as an electric or odic fluid,"—where does it originate, in what way does it act?

It is simpler and more satisfying to share the convictions of that noble and gifted woman, whose séance with Home at Ealing is described in my former volume—Mrs. Browning. Writing to a bereaved mother in Brooklyn, N. Y., she says:<sup>3</sup>—

"Also it seems to me that a nearer insight into the spiritual world has been granted to this generation; so that (by whatever process we have got our conviction) we no longer deal with vague abstractions, half-closed, half-shadowy, in thinking of departed souls."

I will close my present chapter with these words of Mrs. Browning.

<sup>1</sup> I can corroborate this declaration of Lord Lytton's, as regards the physical phenomena.

<sup>2</sup> Spirits, whether in or out of the flesh, have no *supernatural* agencies at their command.

<sup>3</sup> See the Memorial prefixed to "Last Poems of Mrs. Browning" by Theodore Tilton.

## CHAPTER II.

*THE EVIDENCE OF SOME AMERICAN WITNESSES.*

THE biography of D. D. Home has already been written by me, and the form I shall give to my present volume will not be that of "the story of his life from year to year." Instead of tracing afresh his marvellous career from its outset to its earthly close, I shall endeavour to throw fuller light on his gifts and on some of its most interesting epochs, with the help of new witnesses and fresh testimony. Constant research has enabled me to accumulate a mass of additional evidence, and in laying it before the reader, I shall avail myself more largely than in my former work of the materials afforded by the correspondence of Mr. Home for a description of his relations with the persons by whom the manifestations were witnessed. Home will also speak for himself at more length than in my previous pages; for a sufficient number of his letters have been sent me for me to present, in the course of the present volume, some interesting declarations from his own pen of the light in which his mission was regarded by him.

I run no risk of rendering these pages "a twice-told tale." Rather, I shall feel, when I lay down my pen, that the tale even then is but half-told, and that the whole of the marvellous history will never come before the world, for he who alone could have given it completeness has passed to another life than ours. He left it for those who named themselves his friends to bear record of the facts which they had witnessed in his presence, and to declare the convictions which his séances

had wrought in them. That very many of their number should have remained ungratefully silent is their reproach—not his. The *By-ends* of Bunyan would only walk with Truth “when she wore her silver slippers,” and all men spoke well of her. His descendants are exceedingly numerous in our own days, and those among them who have been present at the séances of Home are evidently faithful to the principles of their ancestor. They wait for a day when the world shall speak better of Spiritualism than it does at present, before they will accord any public recognition to Spiritualism as a truth.

“You have the pleasant assurance of having been the instrument of conveying incalculable joy and comfort to the hearts of many people; in the case of some you have changed the whole aspect of their existence; you have made dwelling-places light that were dark before.”

So wrote the Bishop of Rhode Island to Home, on June 2, 1854; and very many letters in my possession echo the sentiments of Dr. Clark. One naturally expects to find that the experiences of their writers have been given to the world, but hardly in one instance among twenty is the expectation realised. The “incalculable joy and comfort” may be there, but the courage to declare them openly is wanting.<sup>1</sup>

In writing my former volume, a single chapter sufficed to exhaust the information which I had then obtained concerning Home’s séances in America. He went from Scotland to the United States in his ninth year, and returned to Europe in his twenty-second. Another—and, as it proved, a last—visit was paid by him to America in the years 1864-5. He continued for many years to cherish the hope of returning; for the States were endeared to him by many associations and the presence of friends for whom he entertained the warmest regard. It was not to be, however, and when Home

<sup>1</sup> “Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.” (St. John ix. 41).

took leave in May, 1865, of the country where his youth had been passed and his extraordinary gift had developed itself, he saw it for the last time.

So many years have elapsed since Home's early séances in the States, that the generation which was contemporary with them has almost passed away; and any addition to the few facts placed on record at the time is extremely difficult to obtain. I account myself fortunate that, after the lapse of nearly forty years, there should still remain in Mr. F. L. Burr, editor of the *Hartford Times*, a witness of some of the most remarkable séances which were held with Home in the town of Hartford, Conn., between the years 1852 and 1855.

Home's history during those years is especially associated with Hartford. At South Manchester, only a few miles away, lived the Cheney family;<sup>1</sup> in Hartford Bishop Clark pursued his investigations of the phenomena, and from Hartford the letter was written to Home of which a few words are quoted above. In Hartford, too, those farewell séances were held (March, 1855) on the eve of Home's departure for Europe, one of which is described in my former work by Mr. Burr.

"In August" (1852), wrote Home in the "Incidents," "I went on a visit to South Manchester, Conn.; and it was at Mr. Cheney's house that I was first lifted in the air."

Mr. Burr was present on this occasion; and writing from Hartford, August 14, 1888, he kindly gives me the following description of what passed:—

"The book" (my former volume) "is one I shall value highly; not alone because it is the biography of one who was a dear friend, but also for the wonderful instances which it contains of his truly wonderful mediumship. Some illustrations of this divine gift I promised to relate to you.

"I will select (from memory alone) two instances at Ward Cheney's. It must have been in August, 1852.<sup>2</sup> It was a bright Sunday after-

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 19-22 and 403 of "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission."

<sup>2</sup> "I have read the wonderful account of what occurred in Manchester."  
—Letter from Miss A. Ely to Home, August 23, 1852.

noon. We were watching the heavy table as it plunged about—in broad daylight, and no one near enough to touch it—when somebody exclaimed, ‘It acts and sounds just like a ship at sea badly buffeted by the waves!’ This fact was apparent to all the company—even the plunging sound of the big waves striking the vessel could be distinctly heard, while the heavy table trembled, as a vessel will when pounded by such seas. The alphabet signal was called, and a name spelled out, which nobody seemed to recognise. ‘Does nobody recognise this name?’ Mr. Cheney asked—and added, after a pause, ‘Perhaps we didn’t get the name right!’ The table rapped out that it was right. Then arose a man on the other side of the room—a person from Hartford, James M’Chester—and made this statement: ‘That is the name of one who was my near and dear friend. He was drowned at sea, in a gale in the Gulf of Mexico.’

“That evening we went, at somebody’s suggestion—not Home’s—into a darkened room. We stood facing each other—but in darkness—in two rows. I stood next to Home, at his right; all of us in close order. Tremendous ‘raps’ or vibrations, surpassing any I had ever heard, fairly shook the walls.”

“We went into a darkened room,” says an unsigned narrative of the same séance in the “Incidents” (vol. i. pp. 36–39), “to see the spiritual flashes of light said to have been vouchsafed to some investigators. Instead of this, we were greeted with tremendous rappings all about us. Some of the blows on the walls, floor, and table were astounding. The very walls shook. . . . Suddenly, and without any expectation on the part of the company, Mr. Home was taken up in the air.”<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Burr—as just narrated by him—was standing next to Home when this first of his many levitations took place.

“He gasped as if frightened—like one strangling or drowning,” writes Mr. Burr to me. “At the same moment there flowed upon his head and shoulders, and also upon me (I was not so tall as he) a wave of cold air, which felt, in that close, sultry August night, almost like a sudden bath of ice-water—and Home began to go up. He rose till his head struck the ceiling. I called to my brother, who happened to be visiting his old home from the far South, and who was in the company, to step forward and satisfy himself of the reality of this

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Henry Spicer, to whom I have referred in another chapter, prints this narrative in his “Sights and Sounds,” published in 1853, exactly as it appeared in the “Incidents” ten years later; and adds: “However singular and incredible the circumstances may appear, the facts themselves are from a source which I have every reason to believe deserving of the most ample reliance.” Mr. Spicer, I may add, was an English writer of some small note in his day. He visited America in the year 1852, and there collected the principal portion of the materials for his volume, “Sights and Sounds.” Ten or twelve years afterwards he made Home’s acquaintance in London, and was present at several séances.

marvel. He did so—putting his hands under Home's feet, and expressing his amazement. (He was here again last month"—July, 1888—says Mr. Burr, in parenthesis, "and distinctly remembered it all.)

"Then Home came down—not abruptly, but easily. I asked him, 'How did that feel? What was it?' He made this answer: '*Somebody*' (accenting that word) 'put a girdle around me here'—round the chest under the arms—'and drew me up.' He was excited; and at the moment of undergoing this experience I know he was somewhat frightened. But that all passed off as soon as he was on his feet again.<sup>1</sup>

"We went into the dining-room (but this, I think, was on a later evening), and sat—the Cheney brothers and I, with Home, around the large table. Nearly all the brothers were there. A very large and heavy hand-bell was on the table, of the size which, in this country, the farmers' wives used to handle in ringing up the distant field-hands for dinner. The only light was the starlight through the windows, but we could dimly yet unmistakably see each other. The bell was lifted up by a faintly-visible spirit-hand, and carried around the table, ringing in front of each sitter; then taken out to the middle of the room and rung there—ending by being placed on the carpet and ringing even then. This was at a distance from all of us of perhaps ten feet. Nobody in the circle moved. The ringing was heard in another room; in fact, all over the house, as we later learned. A hand and part of an arm, faintly luminous with a silvery light, appeared at the end of the table farthest from Home and me, and shook hands in turn with each of the brothers. The alphabet spelt out 'Your father.'

"It was then spelt out, 'Would you like to see the hand and arm of a *negro*, who is in the spirit-world?' The brothers, most of them, said 'No;,' but I said, 'Yes—very much.' At that there appeared a hand and arm—shadowy, dim, not so silvery as the first one—more (if one could say so in the dark room) like the colour of dark-grey ashes. It came to me direct at the head of the table, reached out, and shook hands. Then it disappeared."

The more detailed account of the daylight séance given in the "Incidents" was, I find, from the pen of Mr. Burr himself, and was written in 1852. "I think it was on that same Sunday in August, 1852," he says in a letter to me, "that the heavy table carried me up in broad daylight." In the narrative that appeared in Mr. Spicer's book, and afterwards in the "Incidents," Mr. Burr relates this fact more in detail:—

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<sup>1</sup> "Since the first time I have never felt fear, though, should I have fallen from the ceiling of some rooms in which I have been raised, I could not have escaped serious injury."—Mr. Home, in "Incidents in My Life," page 39.

"The circle," he writes, "was seated a couple of feet at least from the table, . . . which was actually lifted up from the floor, without the application of a human hand or foot. A table weighing, I should judge, one hundred pounds was lifted up a foot from the floor, the legs touching nothing. I jumped upon it, and it came up again. It then commenced rocking, without, however, allowing me to slide off, although it canted to an angle of at least 45°. Finally, an almost perpendicular inclination slid me off; and another of the company tried it with the same results. These things all happened in a room which was light enough to allow of our seeing under and over and all around the table, which was touched by no one except the two persons who respectively got upon it to keep it down" ("Incidents," vol. i. pp. 37, 38).

The Brothers Cheney were silk manufacturers carrying on an extensive business at Hartford. Letters from members of the family to Home mention three brothers—Ward, Seth, and John Cheney; but there appear to have been others.

During the three years following this séance Home was frequently at Hartford, and many séances were held with the Cheney family, and also in the house of Bishop Clark. On his return to the States in 1864, the Cheneys were among the first of his American friends to welcome him back; and March of the following year saw Home again at South Manchester—paying, as he had done exactly ten years earlier, a farewell visit to the family before sailing for England. The wife of Mr. Ward Cheney was passing from earth at the time; and on April 4, 1865, Mrs. Jane Cheney writes from South Manchester to Home in New York:—

"DEAR FRIEND,—Have you heard of the dark cloud, with its glorious golden lining, that has enveloped cousin Ward Cheney's house? An angel has invited Carrie where Ward and yourself, and all of us, will go. Beautiful she looks in her last sleep—her precious body is laid near the same spot where you were lifted up by some unseen power on that memorable Sabbath evening a few weeks since. You must pray for Ward that some sweet spirit may come and comfort him."

This passage in Mrs. Cheney's letter is the only

record that appears to remain of the manifestations at South Manchester on the "memorable Sabbath evening" of March, 1865.

Brief references are made in other letters from Mrs. Jane Cheney to manifestations of which all particulars are lost. Thus, writing from South Manchester, March 18, 1855, to Home in Boston, she says:—

"You have desired me to write you a few lines to be unsealed after you have been four or five days out to sea. These lines were to be descriptive of a snow-storm that took place in South Manchester on the 20th of February. Now, to give you a full and clear description of that glorious scene would be impossible—quite as impossible as to describe the music that was heard at cousin Ward Cheney's two evenings before."

The circle by which this spirit-music was heard consisted, according to Mrs. Cheney's letter, of various members of the Cheney family, and Bishop and Mrs. Clark.

Home saw South Manchester for the last time in April, 1865. When he sailed for England a few weeks afterwards, Mr. Ward Cheney travelled from South Manchester to take leave of his friend on board ship, and perhaps to seek in a last interview with Home a consolation for the great bereavement he had just experienced. Some months later Mrs. Jane Cheney writes to Home:—

"Do you recollect who was the last one you shook hands with, and the last face you caught a glimpse of, as your ship pushed away from shore? When the sun goes down in the West, do you not think of the people away in that part of the world, in the little town of Manchester? and as you fancy yourself walking past Julia's, you hear Robbie calling out, 'Uncle Dan, tell me a story!' and Lulie's sweet face appears before you—then you walk along to cousin Ward's house, and look in those empty rooms. You hear no sound of Carrie's footsteps—her voice is hushed for ever in that once happy home."

During the next few years the letters of the various members of the Cheney family are filled with pressing



invitations to Home to revisit America and South Manchester. "I dearly hope to see you this side of the Atlantic soon," writes Mr. Arthur Cheney in October, 1866: "you will again find loving hearts and a home, any time that you will come."

In the year 1869, Mr Ward Cheney came to Europe, and, about the middle of April, visited Home in London. Viscount Adare was with him at the time; and soon after Mr. Cheney had left, the following incident occurred:—

"I heard," says Lord Adare,<sup>1</sup> "raps upon the table at which I was seated. Home was walking about the room at the time. I called his attention to the raps, and he came and sat down near me. The alphabet was called for, and the name '*Carry*' was spelled out. Home said to me, 'That is Mrs. Cheney.'"

The messages that followed were chiefly addressed to Home. He inquired of the spirit why another departed member of the Cheney family had never communicated with him, and asked, "Does she not like me?" The answer, as recorded by Lord Adare, was:—"Yes, she is the same as ever; but your mission does not always consist of love-messages being given you. When we would do so, we are sometimes unable by reason of your exhaustion; but, you know, so long as you are true to God, your mission, and yourself, that we love you."

In my former work (pp. 15-17) I have described Home's visit to the Elmer family, and their offer to adopt him. His introduction to the Elmers preceded that to the Cheneyes by a few months—having taken place in February, 1852. While Home was staying with them at Springfield, Mass., the phenomenon of a gradual change from darkness to no earthly dawn was frequently witnessed. I have repeatedly been a spectator of this beautiful manifestation, and can testify to the accuracy with which it is described by an anonymous American witness who was present at some of

<sup>1</sup> Now Earl of Dunraven.

Home's séances in Springfield, in 1852. Says this writer ("Incidents," vol. i. p. 25):<sup>1</sup>—

"On one occasion, when a number of friends were assembled at my own house, there occurred a gradual illumination of the apartment. *It appeared like the twilight half an hour after the dawn.* The light continued to increase for about fifteen minutes, and then it gradually diminished.

"On the 30th of March" (1852) "I chanced to be one of a company convened at the house of Mr. Elmer, in Springfield, Mass.—Mr. Home being present—when the room was darkened to see if the mysterious illumination would occur. Immediately the gross darkness began to be dissipated, and in a few minutes the forms of all the persons in the room were distinctly visible. Without disclosing her purpose to any one, Mrs. Elmer mentally requested that the spirits would restore the darkness, and almost instantly the change was perceived by the whole company, and soon every form was lost in the deepening gloom."

The Elmers numbered among their friends a Mr. S. B. Brittan, of New York, who spent a few days at their house in the early spring of 1852, and there made the acquaintance of Mr. Home. While staying at Springfield, Mr. Brittan became the recipient of a memorable and convincing communication from a relative in the spirit-world, his published narrative of which I have included in my previous work. Another message was subsequently given to him, which cut short his stay at Springfield. Mr. Brittan's account of the incident is as follows:—

"One morning we were holding a séance, and the alphabet was being called over, when we were surprised by hearing very loud rappings, accompanied by an order to commence the alphabet anew. Somebody having remarked that it was absurd to demand the alphabet when it was actually being spelled out, the table made a movement of unaccustomed violence. Seeing this, I said that, without doubt, there was no confusion, but that another spirit had come to interrupt the preceding communication, having something more important to transmit to us. Immediately loud raps were heard all over the room, and the table was violently shaken, in sign of assent. I thereupon spelled over the alphabet, and received the following message:—

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<sup>1</sup> I am informed by Mr. J. W. Carrington, of Brooklyn, New York, that the writer in question was a Mr. John D. Lord, of Springfield, in whose house Home had several séances.

“‘You are needed at home; your child is very ill. Set out at once, or it will be too late.’

“I ran for my valise, and departed. When in the street I heard the whistle of the locomotive; it was the last train that day for my destination. The station was more than two hundred yards off, so that, by running with all my might, I was just able to arrive at the moment when the train was starting. I had only time to spring into the last car—without that I would have been too late, as the message had said.

“On reaching my home, I learned the truth of the fact which the spirit had announced to me.”

Later in the spring of 1852, Mr. Brittan returned to seek fresh opportunities of investigation; and it would seem to have been in his company that Home left Springfield for New York. If so, the month of May, 1852, is the date referred to in the following passage of Mr. Brittan's narrative:—

“I devoted some weeks to the investigation of these astonishing facts. We” (Home and the narrator) “travelled together through New England, where we visited several localities. We were together at all hours of the day and night. I occupied the same room with him, in order to have as many opportunities as possible of arriving at an opinion concerning the phenomena in question. Often, when Home was fast asleep and assuredly unconscious of what was taking place, I had long and interesting conversations with the spirits.”

On his arrival in New York, Home made the acquaintance of many well-known Americans, and was overwhelmed with requests for séances. During the summer of 1852 he sat daily—and even twice and thrice a day—with the result that invariably followed on repeated séances; his vital force was drained, and a severe attack of illness confined him to his room.

Among the names of investigators present at séances in New York, that of Mr. Brittan again occurs. On referring to the first volume of “Incidents in My Life,” I find it mentioned there (pp. 33-35). A conference had been formed in New York, which met weekly for the investigation and discussion of spiritual phenomena;

and from its recorded transactions Home made the following extract:—

“*Friday Evening, June 18th, 1852.*

“Dr. Hallock related a case of physical manifestations which took place on the Friday evening previous, at the house of Mr. Partridge. Mr. D. D. Home was the medium; and the circle consisted of Mr. Partridge, his wife and daughter, Mr W. Taylor and wife, *Mr. S. B. Brittan*, and himself.

“‘On the table around which we were seated,’ stated Dr. Hallock, ‘were loose papers, a lead pencil, two candles, and a glass of water. The table was used by the spirits in responding to our questions; and the first peculiarity we observed was, that, however violently the table was moved, everything on it retained its position. When we had duly observed this, the table, *which was of mahogany and perfectly smooth*, was elevated to an angle of thirty degrees and held there, with everything remaining on it as before. It was interesting to see a lead pencil retaining a position of perfect rest on a polished surface inclined at such an angle. It remained as if glued to the table, and so of everything else on it. The table was repeatedly made to resume its ordinary position, and then again its inclination as before, as if to fasten upon us the conviction that what we saw was no deception of the senses. The spirits were then requested to elevate the table to the same angle as before, and to detach the pencil, retaining everything else stationary. This was complied with. The table was elevated, the pencil rolled off; and everything else remained. They were then asked to repeat the experiment, retaining the pencil and everything else upon the table stationary, except the glass tumbler, which slid off, and was caught in the hands of one of the party, as it fell from the lower edge of the table.’”

I have referred in my former work to the experiences of some distinguished American investigators who were present at séances with Home in New York—Gray, a leading physician there;<sup>1</sup> Hare, the eminent chemist and electrician; Mapes, noted for his researches in connection with the application of chemistry to agriculture; and Judge Edmonds, of the U.S. Supreme Court. All four of these convinced themselves of the spiritual origin of the manifestations. What opinion

<sup>1</sup> “*20th December, 1854.*

“DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—Professor Brittan is afraid you may have misunderstood him. He said publicly last night that his confidence in you and his attachment to you were unchanged. Be of good cheer! work for the cause, confide in the spirits, excuse those who misunderstand and suspect you, and grow in God and humanity.—Yours very truly,

JOHN GRAY.”

(if any) was formed by Mr. Horace Greeley, I cannot say; but I find that he was present at a séance with Home in New York during the winter of 1854. Mr. Greeley's desire to investigate the phenomena was expressed to Mr. Home through the gentleman at whose house the séance described by Dr. Hallock was held—Mr. Charles Partridge, of 26, West Fifteenth Street.

"Impressions on the sense of sight," to borrow Hawthorne's phrase, were a favourite means employed by the spirits for enabling Home to convey to the persons with whom they sought to communicate some tokens of their identity. He saw; and others listened in amaze to the graphic accuracy with which he described the visions presented to him, or reproduced the characteristics and peculiarities of their lost friends. I will cite in illustration of these facts some further statements made by Dr. Hallock to the New York Conference of Spiritualists and inquirers, in June, 1852, and recorded in the transactions of that body:—

"One spirit," said Dr. Hallock, "was described as having been known here by the name of Elizabeth. Her person was described, and her prominent traits of character, with such accuracy that a gentleman present knew her at once from the description; the only inaccuracy that he could point out being the colour of her hair, which had been described as brown, when, in fact, it was rather a light auburn. In explanation of which, Mr. Home said, 'When I look at the forehead, which is very white' (which was the fact), 'the hair looks brown to me.'

"The gentleman—a clergyman—declared that he was not thinking of her at all, and that she was brought to his recollection solely by the accuracy of the description given.

"Mr. Home then said: 'I see an old woman, and her name is Abigail—they called her 'Aunt Abby.' To the question, 'How did she look?' he replied by compressing the lips and cheeks in such a way as to indicate a person who had lost her teeth. This at once brought to the inquirer's mind an old lady of that name, called by the whole family 'Aunt Abby,' who died in the spring of 1817, when he was some eleven years of age. The appearance assumed by the medium was that of the last impression left upon his mind. She was an old woman, had prominent features, had lost her teeth for many years; and as her body lay in its grave-clothes, the thought of his young mind, as he stood gazing upon it, was that very peculiarity first indicated by Mr. Home. Her nose and chin nearly met, so acute was the angle formed by her attenuated gums and shrunken lips.

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"Many other facts were given, going to show the identity of the two individuals in question."

The next testimony which I shall give takes me from New York to Boston. One of the Cheney family, an artist of some celebrity, had his home in Boston, and numbered among his friends there a family of the name of Jarves, who were also on intimate terms with Bishop Clark.<sup>1</sup> Hearing from Mr. Cheney of the séances at South Manchester, and learning also of Bishop Clark's prolonged investigations of the phenomena, Mr. and Mrs. Jarves became desirous of making the acquaintance of Home; and he paid them several visits at their home in Boston. The last was in March, 1855, on the eve of his departure for Europe; and during one of the séances then held a manifestation occurred which had its sequel eight years later. I leave the story to be told in the words of a letter now before me, which was written by Mrs. Jarves to Home, in answer to one conveying to his Boston friends the news that Mrs. Alexandrina Home had passed from earth:—

"BOSTON, May 17, 1863.

"MY DEAR DANIEL,—I sympathise deeply with you in your loss of your wife, companion, and friend. I have recently met with a great bereavement myself. My daughter Mary (Mrs. Higginson) was taken with bleeding from the lungs, and in eight weeks she passed from earth-life to the inner world. Mary was my youngest daughter, and she had a gentle, lovely temper and disposition that twined her close round my heart. . . .

"On your last visit to us, at one of our séances, you asked me for paper and pencil. I gave them to you, and you then asked for wafers to seal up your writing. The paper was sealed up very carefully, handed to me, and you told me to keep it until the spirits made it known that it was to be opened. I kept it thus four years or more,

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<sup>1</sup> "5, VIA PALESTRO, FLORENCE, Jan. 11th, 1870.

"My dear Dan, I hope, has not attributed to neglect my not fulfilling my promise sooner of sending a photograph of his old and dear friend. The one enclosed was taken about two years before he passed away. I sent for Bishop Clark to read the service; before commencing he spoke to me, and said he would not be governed by the Burial Service, but adapt the service to the man and occasion. I wish you could have heard the appropriateness."—Mrs. Jarves, writing to Mr. Home after the departure of her husband from earth.

and then, having a good opportunity,<sup>1</sup> I inquired if I might open it. They replied that I had better not, as the contents were not what I might expect. After a while, I asked again; and they said that if I were so desirous, I might open it. I broke the seals, and read this:—

“‘Mary will be the *first* to leave earth. Grieve not. All will be well with her. It may be years.’

“You may judge of my feelings at this announcement; and when she was taken with the hemorrhage, I felt that she would be the first, although for weeks we had been expecting that John would leave us. We laid her body away last Tuesday, just five days ago, and John breathes yet. . . .

“Mr. Jarves is well, sends his love, and would be so happy to see you. I presume Mrs. Clark has written to you ere this, and given all information about themselves.—With love, your friend,

“A. S. JARVES.”

For fictions relative to the circumstances under which Mr. Home left America in 1855, the reader may consult the pages of “Mr. Sludge the Medium” and other similar trash in prose and verse. The facts of his departure I have given in my former work (p. 29). Home left the States in consequence of the rapid progress, during the winter of 1854, of the lung affection from which he suffered, and of the declaration made by Dr. John Gray of New York, and other medical friends, that a voyage to Europe afforded the best hope of prolonging his life.

It was from Boston that Home sailed—on March 28, 1855. The “Sludge” of fiction is also represented as sailing from Boston—driven out with contumely, according to Mr. Browning, by the host whose credulity he had exploited, and who, in exchange for a full confession from the impostor, throws him a handful of five-dollar notes to pay his passage. If “Sludge” was intended for Home, this generous host must needs have been Mr. Jarves, under whose roof Mr. Home passed the very last days of his stay in America, and who did actually arrange for his passage to England, as the following letter shows:—

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<sup>1</sup> Of what nature Mrs. Jarves does not say, but others of her letters show that the members of the family were in the habit of holding séances.

"BOSTON, *March 12, 1855.*

"DEAR DAN,—I expect this will meet you in New York, and have the pleasure to say that I have secured for you a berth in steamer of 28th inst., to be selected by Mr. Tappan<sup>1</sup> or G. B. Upton, soon as they return to the city.

"I shall depend upon you being here at the earliest day possible. Very many of your friends now wait your arrival. It will gratify you to know that very many inquirers have been added since you left; therefore, do not, I beg you, disappoint us—come on, come on. The time you will be with us is short enough.

"D. JARVES."

Home was at Hartford taking leave of the Cheneys, Dr. and Mrs. Clark, and other friends, when this letter reached him. He set out from Hartford about the 16th of March, and sailed from Boston in the *Africa* on March 28th, passing the intervening days under the roof of Mr. and Mrs. Jarves. The incident of the sealed letter took place at one of the séances held during this visit; and the letter in which Mrs. Jarves relates to Home the sequel of the manifestation contains abundant proof of the affectionate remembrance in which he was held by both herself and her husband. It is evident that the originals of the Bostonian host and guest of "Mr. Sludge the Medium" must be sought elsewhere than in Mr. Jarves and Mr. Home. But where? In the recklessly-exuberant fancy of Mr. Browning, doubtless.

The letters of Mrs. Jarves to Home contain tantalising

<sup>1</sup> "*Tuesday Evening, March 27, 1855.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—On your arrival in England you will find many friends, and soon your time will be fully occupied. Now, do not allow your other occupations and engagements to permit you to forget those on this side the water.

"I trust you will deliver the enclosed letter. It is to a valued friend of mine, who lives a few miles from Liverpool, but who has a counting-room in the Exchange. Mr. Schwabe will receive you kindly for my sake; and through him I shall hope to hear from you. Wishing you health and happiness,—I remain your assured friend,

LEWIS W. TAPPAN."

I might quote a dozen such letters to show the true terms on which Home parted from his friends in Boston, but I have already sufficiently proved that the English press of the year 1864 committed an outrage in treating "Mr. Sludge the Medium" as an attack on Home. That the press should have been misled was certainly the fault of Mr. Browning.



references to phenomena left unrecorded by his Boston hosts. "Do you remember," she writes to him on July 5, 1863, "our tea-party?—you, I, and the spirits—when the chairs came up to the table, and afterwards, the same evening, what *wonders* we had, when F. B. Curtis, Mr. Tappan, Mr. Jarves, myself, and you were the only ones present. Mr. Jarves often speaks of you most affectionately."

"The last night you passed with us," says Mrs. Jarves in a letter written three years earlier (May 21, 1860), "the spirits told us we had been so favoured in seeing so much, that it was not necessary for us to seek any more at present, but to *digest* what we had been fed with. We were highly favoured indeed."

This same letter of May 21, 1860, contains references to a person known to both Mrs. Jarves and Mr. Home, and esteemed by neither, who had been traveling in Europe, and had just returned to her native country, America, with the intention of publishing her impressions of the countries visited by her. This authoress *in posse* appears to have entertained some of her European acquaintances with fictions concerning Home and Boston. "What you wrote about Mrs. — was *astonishing*," Mrs. Jarves tells Home, "where we look for truth—but nothing from her would astonish me." Is it possible that Mr. Browning can have met the very mendacious person to whom Mrs. Jarves refers, and have listened to her fables in the belief that they were facts?

In an undated letter from Mrs. Clark, wife of Bishop Clark (apparently belonging to the year 1854), there is a reference to the same person.

"You must take back, dear child," writes Mrs. Clark to Home, "something which you said, but which I am sure you did not mean—for you *know* better. It was with regard to Mrs. —'s influence. It has no more effect upon my mind than the buzz of a mosquito. One might as well attempt to move the stars from their places, as to change me when my feelings and opinions are once fixed. You *know* that, dear Daniel, and you know that, as long as I live, you have a friend upon whom you can sacredly rely. . . . I hope that you

will come to Hartford on Monday morning; it would be so pleasant to see you as much as possible before you go to New York."

"You ask, dear Daniel," writes Mrs. Clark on June 11, 1854, "if I ever 'wish to read the future.' Lately, I have felt an earnest desire to do so, and often I strive to gaze into the depths of the unrevealed, and to learn what is in store for me. The last three years have been years of sorrow, though lightened by the comfort you have brought us. . . . Ah, if I could but make you my own child, so that you might be always with us! . . ."

"Be cheerful and happy: think of all the good you have done, and thank God for your powers. Your reward will come—hope on."

Home paid several visits to Springfield and the Elmers during the years 1852–1855. The first was that of the early spring of 1852, during which the manifestations described by Mr. Brittan occurred. It was at this time, also, that the poet Bryant, Professor Wells of Harvard University, and two other gentlemen came to Springfield to investigate the phenomena, and attested the results of their inquiry in the document cited in my former volume. In the same work appears the evidence of Dr. Gardner of Boston concerning a séance with Home at the house of the Elmers in February, 1854. In September of that year Home once more visited Springfield; and towards the end of the month there appeared in the *Springfield Republican* the following letter:—

"On Monday last, September 25, 1854, I called at the house of my friend Mr. Elmer. Unexpectedly, I met there Mr. D. D. Home, who had just arrived from Boston. After conversing an hour or two, Mr. Elmer, having to leave on the morrow on business, proposed a 'circle' that evening. We accordingly sat down—Mr. Elmer's family, Mr. Home, and I being the only persons present. The occurrences, though very extraordinary, were similar to those already published. We were all touched by unseen hands, *the room being well lighted with gas*, a large bell was passed into our hands, &c.

"Knowing that still more extraordinary 'manifestations' at times occurred to Mr. Home during the night, I mentioned that I would like to witness some of them. They urged me to stay and spend the night, and I did so.

"After retiring to bed, we soon began to hear faint raps, which rapidly increased in power and number, till the walls, floor, and bedstead fairly shook with the strokes. They came like a shower. Soon came other noises, and then the bed began to move across the floor.

This seemed rather dangerous locomotion. It was the only thing that gave me any uneasiness, but having before witnessed so many wonders I was not frightened. . . .

"There came a hand on my head and forehead *as much like flesh and blood as* any I ever felt, only somewhat cold. I began to ask questions, the fingers patting me on my forehead in answer. Several hands, touching me at the same time, claimed to be those of relatives of mine.

"To our wise men whose hobby is scientific investigation I would say: Of what use is it to those who have gone through what I have, to read Dr. Dodd's book, Dr. Rogers' theory, or to marvel over Professor Faraday's discoveries, who only proved that when he pushed, he pushed?  
F. C. ANDRUE."

The affectionate sentiments which had led the Elmers to make Home an offer of adoption in 1852 were preserved by them unchanged to the close of their lives. On his return to the States in 1864, he paid them a visit, and promised to repeat it, if possible, before leaving America, but was prevented by his readings and other engagements in New York. Learning that Home was about to sail for England, Mrs. Elmer, now a very aged woman, wrote to him a letter of farewell, of which the following is a portion:—

"SPRINGFIELD, April 21, 1865.

"MY DEAR, DEAR DAN,—I have given up seeing your pleasant face again. It makes me very sad, but I must submit to disappointment. Please write me as soon as you receive this, and tell me when you sail, and the name of the boat you go in. You do not know how I want to see you, for I love you very much.<sup>1</sup> . . .

"My dear son, please write me when you get home. We all send our love to you, and a very large share from your own mother.<sup>2</sup> Good-bye, dear Dan."

In Mr. Burr's letter to me descriptive of the remarkable séance held in his house at Hartford, on March 14, 1855 (see "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," page 34), he writes:—

<sup>1</sup> "Where do you think I am writing now? At your mother Elmer's. I have a little stand in the parlour, on which my paper lies; and the dear, kind woman sits a little way off, sewing—occasionally interrupting me to say some kind thing of you, or narrate some little incident connected with you. She loves you with a mother's love."—F. Willis, writing from Springfield to Home in Paris, November 16, 1857.

<sup>2</sup> Although he had declined the offer of adoption, Home was in the habit of calling Mrs. Elmer "mother."

"Mr. Home came to our house rather late in the evening, having been at the house of Mr. Day, then the editor of the *Hartford Courant*, all the evening."

Several letters from this Mr. Day and his wife are preserved among the correspondence of Mr. Home. The earliest bears date only three days after the occasion referred to by Mr. Burr, and contains emphatic testimony from Mrs. Day of the impression left by the manifestations which she and her husband had so recently witnessed at séances with Home. I quote a few lines:—

"HARTFORD, March 17, 1855.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Were I able to impress you with the sense of grateful regard borne in my heart towards one who has been the means of bringing so much light and love to it, I should indeed be happy. The past week can never fade from my memory. . . . God bless and keep you in the far-off lands is the sincere prayer of your gratefully attached friend, ANNA J. DAY."

Just ten years later, Home again met Mr. Day, who had left Hartford and was exercising his calling as a journalist in New York. There was staying with the Days at the time a lady who lives in the verse of Poe—Mrs. Sarah Helen Whitman, and she met Home for the first time at a séance in their house. In one of her letters to him Mrs. Whitman writes:—

"I have been re-reading your book, and with renewed pleasure. The whole tone and temper of it is very fine. The incidents of your life are related with the direct simplicity and good faith of one of the evangelical narratives. I think you must have been guided in it by more than mortal wisdom.

"I have written a letter to the *Providence Journal*, which my friends tell me has created much interest there. I believe Mr. Day intends to send you a copy."

A letter from Mr. Day, of May 27, 1865, enclosed the copy in question. Mrs. Whitman's contribution to the *Providence Journal* took the form of a sketch of

Home's life, varied by some severe and just remarks concerning Mr. Browning's very blank verse on Spiritualism; but on the subject of her personal experiences of the manifestations she was as silent as the rest of the world. After narrating the circumstances of her first meeting with Mr. Home, she only adds:—"It is not my intention to speak of the incidents of an informal séance held on that occasion, at which several persons of distinguished literary reputation were present." Her reticence was shared by the remaining sitters; and all I have been able to learn concerning them is, that one of their number was certainly the late Mr. Henry Ward Beecher, and that two others were probably his sister Mrs. Beecher Stowe, and Mrs. S. Newbold, a friend of the Beechers, whose literary signature was "Aunt Sue."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Day, like his wife, had evidently a full conviction of the spiritual origin of the manifestations which they had witnessed at their séances with Home:—

"You have a most important mission," he writes to Home in forwarding the biographical sketch from the pen of Mrs. Whitman. "I know of none more important, and no agent with more power of usefulness to mankind. You, more than many, can be sure that when you leave earth you can indeed say the world is better for your having lived. I trust you have passed your days of personal suffering and sacrifice, and that all the future shall be sunshine. Surely, if you accomplish no more, it ought to be so for your past. But I would have you work—the world needs your labour more than that of any other.—Your friend,  
HORACE H. DAY."

While Mr. Day was still editor of the *Hartford Courant*, there appeared in that journal (March 6, 1858) an interesting narrative of a séance with Home at Hartford three years before. In my former work I quoted a portion of the introductory remarks prefixed by Mr. Day to the statements of his contributor, and

<sup>1</sup> "I shall be glad to welcome your return to America, so will all the inmates of 40, Pierrepont Street. Henry Ward Beecher asked after you the other day when I met him in the street."—Mrs. S. Newbold, writing from Brooklyn to Mr. Home, March 2, 1866.

expressed a hope that they might enable some of my American readers to identify the "D." to whom they referred. Mr. Day's full voucher was as follows :—

"The gentleman who signs the subjoined communication was appointed by the Secretary of War a member of the Board of Examiners of the National Military School at West Point last summer" (1857). "At West Point he was selected by the Board of Examiners, from their number, to deliver the parting address to the cadets. We mention these facts as significant of the mental calibre and culture of the writer. The most entire reliance is placed here, where the writer is well known, on the accuracy, the acuteness, and the candour of the naturally strong-minded and sagacious man, in full possession of all his bodily and mental faculties, who certifies to the fidelity and truth of the following statement."

"D.'s" name is, I regret to say, still a secret from me. I would have been glad to give it, for his story bears internal evidence of being told by a sensible and strong-minded man, and the testimony he gives is all the more interesting in view of his statements that the séance was his first with Home, that it was held in "D.'s" own house, that all the phenomena took place in the light of a gas chandelier with four burners, that the whole of the ten sitters were selected by "D." himself, and that, finally, eight of the ten were incredulous as to the possibility of the phenomena, the most pronounced sceptic among them being "D." himself.

"I had been so unsuccessful," he writes, "in my pursuit of the marvellous that I had begun to regard myself as a confirmed infidel, given over by the spirits to hardness of heart. . . . One session with Mr. Home disabused me of this incredulity, and convinced me, not indeed of the alleged spiritual agency, but that the marvels which attend him *are genuine*, and cannot be explained by jugglery, collusion, deception, or hallucination, but must be solved, if solved at all, by some law of nature or of mind as yet undiscovered. I affirm this of no other medium but Home, for my attempts to extract miracles from other professors of this art have proved most signal failures."

I have briefly summarised the leading particulars of "D.'s" lengthy narrative in my former work. A *verbatim* extract or two may be of interest :—

"The table selected was my dining-table, a heavy extension-table, with movable leaves. It is oval-shaped, and (as arranged for the

circle) measured seven feet eight inches in length, and four feet one in breadth; it was covered with a table-spread, and was lighted by a gas chandelier with four burners.

"The first manifestation perceptible after the séance commenced was a tremulousness, not of the table, but in the wood which composed it, which I named the 'steamboat motion,' from its close resemblance to that general shake aboard a steamboat when the crank is revolving. This sensation continued as long as the circle lasted.

"2nd. Knocks on various parts of the table at the same time, as distinct and marked as can be produced by a strong man's knuckles.

"3rd. Responsive knocks. For instance, the writer would strike three times, and after an interval of half a second, once again on the top of the table; and immediately, underneath his hand, *three, one*, would be given, imitating the sounds and the interval precisely. Drumming with the fingers on the top of the table is answered by the same tune drummed underneath. Scratching on the top is replied to by scratches beneath."

"D." next describes the travelling of a bell round the circle, ringing as it went. "Expressions of wonder and ejaculations of surprise," he writes, "break in a chorus from the circle as the bell appears; and this courtesy is instantly answered by our invisible friends, in a rolling rat-a-tat-tat all over the table, like fifty fairy tambourines in full and joyful play. This demonstration appears to me, for many reasons, to be not the least surprising of the many wonderful things I am recording."

The fifth manifestation was the playing of an accordion by invisible hands.

"Home held the instrument under the table with one hand, his other being in plain sight upon the table, and asked the ladies to name a tune. 'Home, Sweet Home' and 'The Last Rose of Summer' were both called for, and they were both beautifully executed in notes so strong and rich and various, that an accomplished musician at the table said 'that four hands must have been employed;' the tunes seemed to be played with a double octave. In narrating this incident of the evening to a friend the next day, she said in reply, 'You were all psychologised.' If we were, the same influence reached the domestics in the kitchen, for they not only heard the music, but named the tunes."

The accordion then played a few notes while held by "D." and afterwards by another gentleman near him,

they being at the end of the long table farthest from Home.

"It is less preposterous to my mind," adds "D.," "to adopt even the spiritual hypothesis than to believe that Home could accomplish all this by his feet, while twenty suspicious eyes were fastened upon him. The 'feet theory' falls to the ground when it is remembered that Home was seven feet eight inches from the writer, and could not have reached me even if his entire body had been extended in my direction."

Up to this point no message had been received from the spirits, but a communication was now made:—

"While our attention was engrossed with the accordion," writes "D.," "Mr. D——, who was upon my immediate left, exclaimed, 'I am touched!' The alphabet was demanded by a clamorous rapping, the letters were called by Mrs. I——, and those indicated by a rap recorded by myself. We procured the letters O, G, D, when I suggested that there must be some mistake, as I was not aware of any word in any language that commenced with these letters. Mrs. I—— coincided, and suggested that we should begin the alphabet again, when Mr. D—— interposed, and earnestly begged us to go on. Mrs. I—— went on calling the alphabet and the writer recording the letters, until we obtained the word OGDEN; and then it was for the first time brought to the knowledge of some, and to the recollection of others, that this was the Christian name of a most promising son of Mr. D——'s, who had died about a year previously in South America. Home was entirely ignorant of these premises.

"The 'steamboat motion' attracted at this time a lady's attention, who suggested that it would increase the illusion if the bell would only ring. This was no sooner said than, to our great surprise, the table was lifted from the floor, and surged to and fro as if in the breakers of a heavy swell, the bell keeping time to the oscillations of the table.

"Mrs. A——, who was seated next to Home on the right, *and some seven feet from me*, took her watch from its fob, and winding the ribbon round her finger, held her hand under the table. The chain was removed from her finger, and the watch brought and suspended to my finger, which I held under the table for the purpose of receiving it.

"I have restricted myself," declares "D." in conclusion, "to a succinct and unvarnished narrative of the facts, as they actually occurred on this memorable evening, without intruding upon my readers any speculations of my own, or of others. The statements which I have made will be endorsed in every essential feature by the



reputable circle of ladies and gentlemen in whose presence these marvels transpired, and I think it can be safely asserted that they are witnesses whose concurrent testimony would establish any fact, however miraculous, in a court of justice, unless it was contended that miracles cannot be proved."

If only "D." and his nine fellow-witnesses had signed their names to his statement of the facts!

This séance was held at Hartford, in March 1855. I have already mentioned that, towards the 16th of March in that year, Home left Hartford for Boston, where he was the guest of the Jarves family until he sailed for England on March 28th. In the interval he held several séances in Boston; and at one of these "D." was again an investigator, as appears from the concluding passage of his narrative:—

"At one of Home's soirees which I had the pleasure of attending in Boston, the handle of a heavy dinner-bell was obtruded through the interstice of a table (the leaves having been slightly separated), and upon being seized by me, was drawn away by a force greater than I could resist. At the same session, five points (represented by Home to be fingers) were thrust up under the spread, and were touched and counted by myself and others. They felt precisely as human fingers and a thumb would feel under a cloth."

During the early spring of 1865, Home revisited Norwich, Conn., the town where he had lived as a boy nearly twenty years before. He met old friends again, and made new—among the latter a family of the name of Bulkeley, some of whose members continued to correspond with him after his departure from the States. Their letters are chiefly filled with expressions of the spiritual beliefs implanted in the writers by their intercourse with Home, interspersed with scraps of local news; but one or two passages have sufficient interest to merit quotation. The first occurs in a letter of May 11, 1865:—

"I had a letter from Noyes, who is very desponding. He has the idea fixed in his mind that he shall never see you again in this life.

He says, 'No one can understand his intense love for you—that you have been so kind, so good a friend to him.' You know he does not expect to live long. And one evening, in one of your trances, when his sister Eliza came, she bent over him and pointed upwards—counting on her fingers either two or three, I have forgotten which. . . . What shall we do without you! Every place seems sacred here where you have been. What can ever make up your loss!—Ever faithfully and lovingly,  
MARY BULKELEY."

"It is a fearful responsibility, this making every one love you so dearly," the same correspondent tells Home elsewhere. "What a power you have to give happiness or misery!"

A third letter contains the record of a very trifling incident, but one so exquisitely illustrative of that sweet nature which charmed all who knew it, that I cannot pass it by. The letter in question was written on the last day of 1865:—

"I must tell you of such a pleasant little incident which happened lately. About a week ago, Mrs. Henry Parker, a very sweet little woman, was here, and seeing your picture, she said she used to see you quite often at a distance when you were here, and she made up her mind she should not like you at all. But one day she was going to church with her little Lizzie, and the child was crying bitterly because she did not want to go. You met them, and gave the child such a beautiful look with your eyes right from your soul (I use her language), and you talked to her so beautifully, that you won her (Mrs. Parker's) heart for ever—she felt like worshipping you.

"The tears came to my eyes while she was telling it, for such acts of kindness were so natural for you, and it brought you before me so vividly."

One of Mr. Home's oldest American friends, Mr. J. W. Carrington, of Albany Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y., has very kindly sent me some particulars of some of the manifestations witnessed by him.

Among the names mentioned in the first chapter of my former work were those of Mr. Carrington himself, Professor Bush, Dr. Gerald Hull, Judge Edmonds, &c. Concerning these early investigators of the phenomena, and the period of Home's life (1851-1855) with which their researches were associated, Mr. Carrington writes to me, after reading my book:—

"Judge Edmonds, who wrote the Introduction to the American edition of the 'Incidents,' says of Mr. Home:—'During a great part

of the time between the development of his powers and his departure for Europe, his mediumship was confined to a very small circle of gentlemen of education and means, who were, through him, thoroughly investigating the subject.'

"As you refer in your 'Life and Mission' to many of the members of the 'small circle' which Judge Edmonds speaks of, it may interest you, as a sort of confirmatory evidence, to know a little more of some of them, whom I knew personally.

"Judge Edmonds (of one of our higher Courts) made Mr. Home's acquaintance *chez moi*. Professor George Bush did the same. He was my old Greek Professor at the University of the City of New York. Mr. W. Green of Boonton was my uncle by marriage. Dr. Gerald Hull of Newburgh had a younger brother, Dr. Cooke Hull, who was my family physician; and Dr. John Gray, a brother-in-law of the two Drs. Hull, had been a consulting physician for me.

"Now, as to my experiences with Home. I remember when he first came to us (July, 1851) we were sitting one evening around a heavy and long dining-table—myself, Mrs. Carrington, and two or three friends. I was writing at the end of the table on a portable desk, and not noticing the others, who were talking with Home. Presently the table began to slide towards me, and tipped me slowly back, pressing on my breast, until my chair stood on the hind-legs only. One of our friends (I think it was my cousin, Miss Ely) exclaimed: 'Oh, take care! it will throw you over.' Instantly the table receded, and my chair came down to its place.

"I laid down my pen, and made all the others draw back a yard or more from the table, so that they could not touch it. 'Now,' I said, 'don't say a word, any of you. Let us see what it can do.' At once the table pressed on me again, tipped the chair slowly back until it was balanced as before, and there stopped. Then I said, 'Go on!' and instantly I was thrown backwards, chair and all, but nothing slid from the table.

"We had frequently the phenomenon spoken of by you on page 77 of the 'Life and Mission'—*viz.*, 'a massive table becoming light or heavy at desire'—lifted at one moment by a single finger, and the next minute perfectly immovable by a strong man.

"My father-in-law, a widower, and a great friend of my old Professor—Bush—was at first strongly opposed to these things; and on one evening, knowing there was to be a séance at my house, he came to remonstrate with Mrs. C., and to satisfy himself (as he expected) that it was all charlatanry. He was induced to join the circle; he became interested; and presently Home said something to him which purported to come from his wife, who passed away many years ago; and so great and lasting was his grief at her loss that her name was never mentioned before him. He was excited at what he heard from Home, and presently said, looking at him, 'Fanny, if that is you, give me one of your looks!' At once Home opened his eyes partly, and threw into his face a peculiar side-long, roguish look—indescr-

able. Ever after, the old gentleman took great interest in Home and Spiritualism. *He had had proof*; and, like Napoleon III., he did not *believe*, he *knew*. Always, after that, he spoke freely and pleasantly of his wife.

"The 'extraordinary faculty' I spoke of in a former letter<sup>1</sup> was Home's ability to describe character and personal appearance from handwriting, held unopened in his hand.

"Shortly after the occurrence just described, my father-in-law, Mr. Worthington, was present when the first of these handwriting cases occurred. Two or three others were present, but I forget who. Home was in a trance, I think. We had been talking of such things as reading character, &c.; and Mrs. Carrington took a visiting-card from the parlour-table and gave it to Home—the card of a lady whose husband, as well as herself, was an intimate friend of Mrs. C. and her father. Home clasped the card close in his hand *without looking at it*. Then he commenced describing a very marked and peculiar person, physically and mentally, but *it was a gentleman* he spoke of. Mrs. Carrington's face put on a look of consternation as he continued; she thought he was making a complete failure. I motioned to her to keep still. When Home finished, I said to him, 'Hand me that card;' and I quietly passed it to Mr. Worthington—he opened his eyes wide, and laughed. The card was a written one (not engraved); and *in the husband's hand*, which both Mr. W. and I knew well. The character was perfectly described.

"I ought to say that *I* also supposed the card to be in the lady's hand (which was something like her husband's, until I looked more particularly at it when I took it back from Home, after he had described a gentleman.

"After this, although, of course, we had many séances, I do not recall any one particularly, until his visit to America in 1864-5. I was then living in Classon Avenue, Brooklyn. One evening, seven or eight persons, including Home, Mrs. C., and myself, were seated around my library table, with a gas-light over our heads, quite enough to make everything clearly visible. Home sat at one end of the table, and I on one side, next to him. Behind me was a sofa, and under that was a bagatelle-board, which folded in the middle when not in use, and in it were kept the mace, cue, balls, &c. There was no one in the room except those at the table, and no one of them rose from the table during the séance. After rappings, &c., had continued for some time, Mrs. C. first heard a noise about the bagatelle-board; and we all listened and watched, until we *saw* the cue—about four feet long—*drawn out from under the sofa*, hand-end first, past Home and me, and then raised and passed, point first, between him and me, and thrust under the table, made to touch different sitters, and then *returned to its place*.

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<sup>1</sup> "I can give you," Mr. Carrington wrote to me, "one or two cases showing a strange and extraordinary faculty or power in Home, of which you give no instances."

"At the same sitting, for the first and only time in my experience, I was touched by a hand, with a light grasp on my knee, clearly and unmistakably felt, while no sitter had moved from his place and every hand was above the table.

"On this same visit of '64-5, one afternoon, near nightfall, Home, an aunt of mine, Mrs. C. and I, were in our parlours alone. We were talking of Spiritualistic matters; and as Home talked he was walking up and down the rooms. We had been speaking of describing from handwriting, and I thought of another chance to try Home. I went to a desk in another room, and brought a letter, which I placed in Home's hand without taking it out of its envelope. He did not even glance at the address, crumpled it up closely in his hand, and went on walking and talking.

"Presently he began to speak in general terms of the matter of the letter (*correctly*), and then to describe the writer of it, in person and character—spoke of his great nervousness, &c., &c. I did not know the writer personally, and had only seen a portrait of him—and as far as I could judge from what I had read and heard, the description was right. While thus describing, Home had kept on walking, but suddenly stopped an instant—then turned, and walking up to my aunt, laughingly threw the letter into her lap, and exclaimed, 'Why, it's John Leech!'

"It was a pleasant note from Leech, the famous artist of the London *Punch*, with whom I had had a little correspondence a year or two before.

JOHN W. CARRINGTON."

In the first chapter of "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission" (pp. 11-13), I related some incidents of a visit that Home, then a lad of eighteen, made, in the spring of 1851, to a family of the name of Ely, residing at Lebanon. Mr. Carrington wrote to me on this subject:—

"We have been lending your book in turn to several of our friends who knew and appreciated Home. I am now about to send it to my cousin (*ci-devant* Miss Ely of Lebanon), who wrote to him the letters advising him not to give so many séances daily and not to change his name. I have written to her asking her to recall and record such of her reminiscences as may interest you."

Miss Ely (now Mrs. Farrar Drinkwater) kindly sent me, through Mr. Carrington, a letter written by herself in May, 1851, and giving some particulars of the early acquaintance of her family with Mr. Home. It was

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addressed to a brother residing at Boonton, N. J., and preserved by him.

"I suppose," writes Miss Ely in this letter of thirty-eight years ago, "you are waiting to hear from me with some degree of impatience, since Ezra's<sup>1</sup> letter has informed you that I have so much to tell you."

The writer then narrates the circumstances under which Mr. Home was introduced to the family at Lebanon by a Mr. Cumings.

"It instantly occurred to me," says Miss Ely, "that this was the same person who was the medium at Willimantic when the table was moved, &c., an account of which you read before you left here. Such being my impression, of course a 'medium' was an object of some curiosity; and while I was talking to Mr. Cumings, I was quietly scrutinising him.

"You may like a description of Daniel, as we call him. He is but seventeen years old, tall for his age, fair complexion, hair neither red, brown, nor auburn, but a complete mixture of the three—like a three-coloured, changeable silk—rather inclining to curl; and beautiful hair it is, as you can imagine. A large, broad forehead, well-developed, lively grey eyes, nose not remarkable, and a handsome mouth and teeth—easy manners; very intelligent for his age, perfectly artless, and very affectionate.

"The very first evening of his being in Willimantic, he passed into the clairvoyant state. To test it Mr. Cumings took Daniel home with him on Saturday, and was soon satisfied of his independent (so to speak) clairvoyance; and on Monday, as I have said, he came here with him, principally, I suppose, that we might have an opportunity of hearing the 'rappings.'"

The letter then proceeds to describe minutely the incidents of this first visit of Mr. Home to Lebanon. He passed into the trance—"and after a few minutes' silence, he said to me," writes Miss Ely to her brother, "'There is a spirit very near you—a young lady; not a relative; but she seems to love you very much, and has not been in the spirit-land long—was a teacher, and loved little children.' From the description, I knew it was Abby,<sup>2</sup> and I asked if she had any message for me. In a few moments he spoke again:—'She says, "Let Truth be your motto, no matter if they do revile you, and call you *infidel*."' He returned to the normal state soon afterwards."

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<sup>1</sup> "Ezra was my young cousin of whose passing away Home speaks in his first volume of 'Incidents.' I was at Lebanon, and sat up one night with Ezra, a very few days before his passing, and saw how happy and cheerful he was.—J. W. CARRINGTON."

<sup>2</sup> "A young friend of Miss Ely, who had recently passed away.—J. W. C."

Later in the evening rappings were heard, some very loud, and Home was again entranced.

"He told us," says Miss Ely, "that Lorenzo Dow<sup>1</sup> had impressed him, and immediately burst out laughing at Lorenzo's droll appearance when he inhabited 'the form'—'old brown shoes tied with tow strings, and a leather string for a watch-chain.' . . .

"I asked, 'Is Abby here?' 'Yes; she is standing right over you.' 'Ask her if she wants to come back again?' 'Oh, if you could see how she looks at you! She knows you do not mean what you say. Still, she seems to be looking back towards some one she has left behind.' I asked if there were not some spirit with her—having *William* in my mind. 'Yes, there is one, a bright spirit that is trying to draw her up to him—he has been there longer than she has—though it is not very long since he left the earth.' Then he spoke the name *William* distinctly. He presently came out of the trance-condition, expressing great reluctance to do so, as he always does—wishes he could stay among the bright and beautiful. Raps commenced, and came as distinctly and energetically as you can imagine. Father rapped, and grandfather too.<sup>2</sup> It was almost too much for mother, and for me too."

The next morning other manifestations took place. While Home was entranced, communications were made through him in two languages with which he was then entirely unacquainted. "He repeated what the spirit said to him in German," writes Miss Ely, "and not a word of German does he know commonly."

"Abby impressed him again—took him back to the hour when her spirit left the body; and he saw the smile the spirit impressed upon the clay, 'which,' he said, 'those around thought was the triumph of faith, and thought to exult over you, a poor infidel; but there was no faith about it.' That last expression, 'There was no faith about it,' is Abby *perfectly*."

"In the afternoon H. and J. Bill came. Daniel again passed into the trance, and this time saw Edward Bill and an Italian who lived many years ago; *and then he talked in Italian.*"

("My cousin," writes Mr. Carrington, "is a well-educated lady, and perfectly able to say when Home was talking German or Italian.")

". . . *Saturday Afternoon.*—Ezra and I were going over to

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<sup>1</sup> "Lorenzo Dow was a noted and half-crazy Methodist itinerant preacher, well known throughout the country. He passed away some forty years ago.—J. W. C."

<sup>2</sup> "The Rev. Zebulon Ely, the principal clergyman of Lebanon. Died in 1824. Miss Ely and her mother were excommunicated on account of their interest in Home and their belief in Spiritualism.—J. W. C."

Willimantic, when, on looking up the street, we saw Daniel coming. He stayed to tea, and then started to go and see J. Bill, having been strongly impressed by Edward (the deceased son) that day, before leaving Mr. Dean's. He found Mrs. Bill sick, passed into the trance condition and prescribed for her, stayed all night, and came back here in the morning; became clairvoyant, or, as he says, was magnetised by spirits, and saw Aunt Abby Ely, told when she left the form—that she was away from home at the time,<sup>1</sup> and described her character very accurately. She impressed him to tell me 'to let my thoughts dwell much upon the spirit-land, and not to be deterred from seeking Truth, let ridicule assail me as it might.'"

Mrs. Drinkwater adds:—"In looking over some old letters of my late brother George Ely, I found this, which I wrote to him in 1851, at the very outset of Mr. Home's wonderful career. When he came back to America in 1864-65, he came to Boonton, where I then lived. I was very glad to see him, and he was very demonstrative in his joy at seeing me. He stayed only one night, and there were no manifestations. This was the last time I saw him. I have read over my old letter, and do not think I can give anything *more* remarkable than some of the facts in that."<sup>2</sup>

In the first volume of the "Incidents" (pp. 14-15), Home relates the result of the errand on which he was sent by the spirits, as mentioned in Miss Ely's letter.

"After riding over from Lebanon, towards evening, 'with rain-laden clouds fast overshadowing the sky,' I reached," he writes, "what I knew from description must be the house of Mr. B—" (Bill), "and as I was about to dismount, the first rain-drop fell on my ungloved hand, and with the contact came the most vivid impression that Mr. (Bill)'s mother was dangerously ill. I rang the bell, and Mr. (Bill), having seen me, came himself to open the door. As he did so, I said, 'Your mother is ill, and I have been sent to say what

<sup>1</sup> "She was a young sister of my mother, who died in 1820, in one of the Southern States.—J. W. C."

<sup>2</sup> After reading my former work, Mrs. Drinkwater writes to me from Prospect, N. Y. (May 13, 1889):—

"To say that I have been greatly interested faintly conveys the feeling with which I have literally *devoured* the contents. . . . When I had finished reading, it seemed as if I had never half realised Dan's gifts before. In truth, after he went to Europe I knew but comparatively little of his wonderful career. A newspaper article would now and again convey intelligence of his whereabouts. One letter only he wrote me, and that was just after Mrs. Lyon played the farce of adoption. His heart was overflowing with thankfulness for his apparent good fortune, and he reminded me that if I ever wanted a brother I would find one in him. He was indeed ever loyal to his early friends.

"Allow me to congratulate you on so successfully accomplishing such a labour of love, as well as of justice. The scientists may wilfully close their eyes, but the awakening that has been brought to thousands through his instrumentality more than compensates for the stumblingblocks that have been raised."



will relieve her.' His look of intense surprise baffles description, as he said, 'How on earth could you have known of her illness, as it is only an hour since she fell ill, and we have sent in another direction for a medical man; but I fear he will not arrive in time to save my poor mother, as she seems sinking so rapidly.' On entering the house, I stood waiting to see what impression I might receive. Whilst I was standing thus, I was thrown suddenly into a trance; and I was told by Mr. (Bill) that in that state I led the way to his mother's bedroom, and that after making a few passes over her with my hands, the acute pains left her, and in a few minutes' time she was in a quiet sleep. Whilst in the trance, I also mentioned simple remedies of herbs for immediate use, and others for continued use. I was then led by the unseen power into the sitting-room, and there returned to my normal state, greatly surprised when these things were related to me. The doctor arrived in about an hour, to find his patient quite out of danger; and on examining her, he said that, from the nature and violence of the attack, it would in all probability have been fatal, had steps not been taken at once to alleviate the symptoms. A letter written a few weeks after to a friend by Mr. (Bill) says that his 'mother has not had such health for eighteen years past as she now enjoys; she follows implicitly all the instructions given through Daniel, and the effect is magical.'"

## CHAPTER III.

### THE YEAR 1855.

THE farthing candles of the world of mind have always had a great contempt for the stars. In 1863, the *Saturday Review*, in its "criticism" of Home's "Incidents," declared that the writings of Swedenborg were the outcome of mental disease, and rejected the evidence of Swedenborgians present at the séances of Home as that of "fanatics—educated and living in an excited and unnatural state of the spiritual faculties." This foolish talk seems to have been due to the presence in the "Incidents" of the testimony of a Swedenborgian, Dr. J. Garth Wilkinson, whose "Evenings with Mr. Home and the Spirits" contains numerous facts concerning the séances of the year 1855. Dr. Wilkinson's intellectual and moral qualities were held in high esteem by some of the foremost men of his day;<sup>1</sup> and in spite of the *Saturday* reviewer's disdain, I shall venture to put forward his evidence as worthy of attentive consideration, and to think it no fault of Swedenborg's that the reviewer in question was incapable of apprehending his greatness. A very much greater man than ever wrote for the *Saturday Review* has left on record a very different verdict concerning Swedenborg. I refer to Thomas Carlyle, who was persuaded to read the writings of the seer whom he had ignorantly ridiculed, and who confessed after doing so, "Never, until now, did

<sup>1</sup> In Mr. Julian Hawthorne's biography of his father there are printed some interesting letters from Nathaniel Hawthorne concerning Dr. Garth Wilkinson and his faith in Spiritualism. The gifted author of "The Scarlet Letter" frequently discussed with his friend the séances of Home.

I comprehend how great a prophet has been among mankind!"

The witness whose testimony I am about to cite was, like Dr. Garth Wilkinson, a well-known Swedenborgian, and, like the investigators to whom I have devoted a former chapter, a member of the literary guild. Mr. William White, the biographer of Swedenborg and commentator on his writings, delivered a lecture at the Cavendish Rooms, London, on the 17th of July, 1870,<sup>1</sup> in which he gave the following particulars of a séance with Mr. Home fifteen years before:—

"In May, 1855, I chanced to meet Dr. Garth Wilkinson, and in the course of conversation he described a variety of extraordinary phenomena which he had witnessed in the presence of Mr. Home, a medium who had arrived from the United States. He advised me to see Home, but I lacked sufficient curiosity to do so.

"Repeating Dr. Wilkinson's experience to a friend, coupled with his advice, he said, 'I wish you would invite Home to my house, and come with him.' Thus incited, I wrote to Home, made an engagement, and on the evening appointed, conveyed him in a hansom from his lodging in Jermyn Street to my friend's residence in Islington. . . .

"At my friend's house we were ushered into the dining-room, where sat twelve gentlemen, the majority of whom were strangers to me, and all to Home. Home was taken aback, and remarked that spiritual manifestations took place with difficulty in large and promiscuous companies—"but," said he, "we cannot now do better than try."

"We sat round a long dining-table, Home on one side nearly facing me. The window-blinds were drawn down, as it was dusk, *candles brought, and the rooms well lighted*. We were requested to place our hands on the table, and to converse freely. We had scarcely been seated five minutes when raps began to be heard on the table, on the walls, and on the floor.

"'Will the spirits kindly rap here?' asked Home, and immediately raps took place on the table in front of him. Others made similar requests, and were as quickly gratified. I did so myself, and had an instant response. And here let me observe that I had fancied, if ever I came into open conversation with spirits, I should be intensely, if not painfully, excited. On the contrary, on this occasion I was perfectly calm, indeed enjoyed unwonted composure, with all my wits alert for observation.

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<sup>1</sup> Reprinted in the *Spiritual Magazine* for September, 1870.

"Various feats of telegraphy were attempted, one rap signifying 'No,' two 'Doubtful,' and three 'Yes ;' but there were so many with questions to ask that the process was confusing and tedious. As for the raps, they seemed as if caused by slight explosions within the wood, rather than by blows on its surface.

"A small hand-bell was laid on the floor, and shortly commenced tinkling. Home put his hand under the table without stooping, and produced the bell. The spirits, he said, had brought it to him. It was again thrown under the table, and shortly ringing was heard behind our chairs, as if the bell were moving around the sitters. Home begged that none of us would look ; but one gentleman, hearing it at his back, could not repress his curiosity, wheeled round, and at the same moment the bell dropped on the floor, near the wall beside his chair. I noted at the time that Home's hands were resting, like my own, on the table. Once the bell was silent for a while, and was inquired for. I turned my eyes towards the floor under the table, and saw it fall between my feet. It was suggested that it had been in the course of conveyance to me.

"Home asked for an accordion, but there was not one in the house. A servant was despatched to a neighbour, and borrowed a concertina. Home said it would do, and placed it on the floor under the table. In a few minutes it commenced playing. Home put his hand down ; the concertina met his advance and performed music whilst he held it, his left hand being on the table. Then he replaced it on the floor, *where it resumed playing by itself.*

"Feeling something touch my leg, I looked, and there was the concertina. I did not attempt to take it, but it rose to my knees. I took the strap, and the instrument was pulled out and pushed in, making sounds, but nothing that could be called music. I had some difficulty in adjusting my hand so as to resist the upward pressure, and distinctly felt an invisible hand co-operating with my own. Finding me, I suppose, an inefficient medium, the concertina was gently withdrawn.

"All the time the rapping continued about the room and on the table, but not noisily. Several of the party likewise felt hands touching them. One gentleman, who sat on the side of the table opposite to me, had his face bathed in perspiration. Subsequently I inquired what had so moved him, and he informed me that he had had his hand grasped repeatedly and affectionately in a fashion which was peculiar to his father, who had left this for the spiritual world.

"*Raising my eyes, I saw a hand, as of a boy, over the breast of a friend opposite to me.* I saw it as distinctly as if it had been a hand pushed through a door. Suddenly one of the company gave a shriek, sprang from his seat, and threw his arms in the air. What was the matter ? we all, in a breath, inquired. A hand, he answered, had approached him, and when laid on his forehead he could not restrain himself.

"So the evening terminated. Two hours had passed away as ten minutes; and as I drove back to Jermyn Street with Home, I felt as if my faith in the other world had got a new rock for its foundation."

I have observed that none of the hostile critics of my former work made any attempt to account for the manifestations there described and attested; they contented themselves with ridiculing or ignoring the testimony of the witnesses—although those witnesses comprised investigators of every nationality and every condition in life. If the evidence of hundreds of men and women who had never even seen each other, and whose habits of thought were as diverse and widely separated as their nationalities and social condition, cannot suffice to prove the actuality of the facts to which it refers, there is an end of human testimony.

Two manifestations, in especial, my critics passed over in silence—the spirit-hands that were grasped by persons to whom they appeared, and melted in their grasp into air; and the accordions and other instruments that were played upon *while held by other hands than those of Home*. The accordion is not an instrument with which much can be done by human hands, but there is a consensus of emphatic testimony to the exquisite music drawn from it by invisible performers at the séances of Home. "We listened with suspended breath," wrote Robert Bell in his *Cornhill* article. "The air was wild, and full of strange transitions, with a wail of the most pathetic sweetness running through it. The execution was no less remarkable for its delicacy than its power. When the notes swelled in some of the bold passages, the sound rolled through the room with an astounding reverberation, then gently subsiding, sank into a strain of divine tenderness."—"Such music as we heard was no ordinary strain," wrote Dr. Gully to the *Morning Star* concerning the same séance; "it was grand at times, at others pathetic, to a degree which no one can imagine who has not heard it. I have heard Blagrove repeatedly; but it is no libel on that master of the instrument to say that he

never did produce such exquisite distant and echo notes as those which delighted our ears. The instrument played, too, at distant parts of the room, many yards away from Home and from all of us."

Numerous similar testimonies to the enchanting character of this spirit-music will be found distributed through this and my former volume.<sup>1</sup> It is but a feeble mode of dealing with them to conjecture, as the critic commonly does, that the listeners were either no judges of music or under the influence of an excited imagination. As regards the evidence of witnesses who have seen an accordion play untouched by Home, or have held it in their own hand while it was playing, the hostile critic says nothing, for the evident reason that he has nothing to say. During the past thirty years, men of science, physicians, journalists, &c., have discussed the séances of Home in a host of books, pamphlets, and articles in magazines and newspapers, and have invented theories without number to account for the phenomena; but none has attempted to show that it was practicable for Home to cause an ordinary accordion, which he had never seen until its owner brought it to the séance, to play in the light in another man's hand. And not only were these accordions invariably the property of one or other of the investigators present, and never that of Home, but the remaining sitters could always verify, by inspection of the accordion, the fact that it was in all respects an ordinary instrument.<sup>2</sup>

In face of evidence so complete and decisive, for a critic to leave the testimony before him undiscussed is practically to confess his inability to attempt its refutation. Vague generalities concerning the laws of nature and the credulity of mankind are not refutations of attested facts, though many writers appear to mistake

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, pages 32, 182, 187, 246, 295, 321, 353, and 377 of "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission."

<sup>2</sup> "We took the accordion to pieces and tried it, and found it to be in every respect an ordinary instrument."—The *Times* report of a séance with Home (published December 26, 1872.)

them for such. Is the critic acquainted with all the laws of nature? What ground has he for assuming that the many distinguished and able men, of all countries, whose names and testimony I have given, were either less intelligent or more credulous than himself? No; the true difference between him and them is, that they had investigated before deciding, while he decides without having investigated. It is the easier and more popular method of the two, but the opinions so formed are apt to be of worse than no value.

It will be seen from Mr. W. White's narrative that he was one of the earliest English investigators of the phenomena, and met Mr. Home so far back as May, 1855. Dr. Garth Wilkinson, to whom he owed his introduction, was present at numerous séances in the same month of May, 1855, and during the three months that followed. Some of these séances were held at Cox's Hotel in Jermyn Street, one at Dr. Wilkinson's own residence, the rest at Ealing, where Home passed the summer of 1855, on a visit to the Rymer family. In the pamphlet to which I have already referred, "Evenings with Mr. Home and the Spirits," Dr. Wilkinson published an account of the more remarkable manifestations witnessed by him, and of various proofs of spirit-identity that he had received. Like almost every witness who has written on the subject, he describes the physical phenomena at length, but deprives the spirit-messages of much of their interest and value by omitting names and giving only meagre details of their substance, on the ground of the private nature of the matters referred to. I have quoted in my previous volume (page 49) such particulars as Dr. Wilkinson supplies concerning one of the most remarkable of these communications. A few supplementary extracts from his pamphlet will not be out of place here:—

"It was late in the spring of this year" (1855) "that I was invited by a friend, well known in the literary world,"<sup>1</sup> he writes, "to

<sup>1</sup> Here is another of the numerous literary men present at séances with Home whose names and experiences remain unknown to me, in spite of all research.

pay a visit to the lodgings of Mr. Daniel Dunglas Home, then recently arrived from America, for the purpose of witnessing certain remarkable phenomena alleged to be from supernatural causes. Many feelings prompted me to accept the invitation; as also did the knowledge that Mr. Home was familiarly known, as a plain, honest man, to Dr. Gray, the first homœopathic physician in New York, for whose character I have the highest esteem."

Dr. Wilkinson's first observations of the phenomena were made in Jermyn Street—"in a large upper room, rather bare of furniture," he writes. "A sofa, a large round table, and a little buffet, together with a few chairs, were the fittings-up. One of the party had brought with him a hand-bell and an accordion."

"The room was lighted by a lamp placed on the table; and when the latter 'raised itself, and rocked up and down, the lamp,'" says Dr. Wilkinson, "seemed as if it must tumble off; but Mr. Home assured us there was no danger of that. . . . The bell was carried under the table to each, and rung in the hand of each. The accordion was now placed beneath the table, and presently we heard it moving along. Mr. Home put down his hand to the margin, and the instrument was given to him. With one hand upon the table, and with the other grasping the white wood at the bottom of the accordion, he held it bottom upwards, the keys hanging down over, and the instrument resting for support on his right knee. It played 'Home, sweet Home' and 'God save the Queen,' with a delicacy of tone which struck every one present: I never heard silence threaded with such silver lines. Afterwards, in the same way, we were favoured with 'The Last Rose of Summer.' The accordion was then taken to each member of the party in succession; we could hear it rustling on its way between our knees and the pedestal of the table; and in the hand of each person a few notes, but no whole tunes, were played. When in my own hand, I particularly noticed the great amount of force which was exerted by the player. It was difficult to hold the instrument, from the strong downward pull; and had I not been somewhat prepared for this, the accordion would have fallen upon the floor."

It was during this séance—his first séance with Home—that Dr. Garth Wilkinson grasped and attempted to retain a spirit-hand,<sup>1</sup> which was conveying a small bell to him. "I had no sooner grasped it momentarily," he testifies, "*than it melted away*, leaving my hand void, with the bell only in it."

<sup>1</sup> See "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," p. 57.



The second séance described by the Doctor was held at his own house :—

“It was perhaps a fortnight after this,” he writes, “that Mr. Home came by invitation to my own house, to sit in the circle of my family. . . . Arrived in the drawing-room, the ‘raps’ immediately commenced in all parts of it, and were also heard in the back drawing-room, which opens into the front by folding-doors. The party assembled to constitute the ‘circle’ consisted of Mr. Home, my wife, my four children, and myself, with two domestics.”

Dr. Wilkinson describes the early phenomena of this séance as having consisted of vibrations that shook the chairs of all present, and the floating of a heavy table in mid-air for the space of half a minute. Hearing the hand-bell travelling to him under the table, he put down his hand to grasp the spirit-hand, as he had done a fortnight previous. The experience of that first séance was repeated :—

“I grasped the hand,” he writes, “*but it melted as on the first occasion* ; and immediately a call was made for the alphabet, there being something to communicate. The spirits now spelt out through Mr. Home, who had known nothing of what I had done under the table, ‘Do not grasp our hands.’ I asked why ; and Mr. Home said that they had great difficulty in presenting, and thus rapidly incarnating, these hands out of the vital atmospheres of those present, and that their work was spoilt, and had to be recommenced, when they were interfered with—perhaps as a thought is sometimes broken in twain, and cannot be easily resumed, on the irruption of a stranger. . . .

“My wife felt the sleeve of her dress pulled frequently ; and as she was sitting with her finger-ends clasped and hands open, with palms semi-prone upon the table, she suddenly laughed involuntarily, and said, ‘Oh, see ! there is a little hand lying between mine—and now a larger hand has come beside it. The little hand is smaller than any baby’s, and exquisitely perfect.’ Our domestics, and two of the children, as well as my wife, all saw these hands, and watched them for between one and two minutes, when they disappeared. . . .

“An hour and three-quarters were occupied in manifestations, of which I have mentioned only the most striking, or those personal to myself ; and now Mr. Home passed into the trance-state, spoke of the spirit-life and the coming knowledge of it on earth, and said a few words apposite to each person present ; dwelling also upon the spiritual attendants who were standing beside each. When he came to my wife he lifted up his hands in an ecstasy, and described a spirit with her, most tiny, but beautiful. He said it was a little sister who had gone away a long time. ‘But,’ she said, ‘I never had such a

sister.' 'Yes, you had, though she had no name on earth.' On inquiry in the family, an event such as he alluded to had happened. This is the chief part of what struck me in Séance No. 2."

This communication to Mrs. Garth Wilkinson of an event that had actually happened in her family, *but of which she was ignorant*, will remind the reader of my former work of the séance at Florence on July 7, 1874, during which Mr. Home, in the trance, described to Cavaliere Soffietti a spirit standing beside him—an old nurse of his. The Cavaliere could recollect no such person :—

" 'She says you ought not to forget her,' continued Mr. Home ; 'for she saved your life when you were but three and a half years of age. You fell into a stream of water near a mill, and were just about to be drawn into a water-wheel when she rescued you.' Cavaliere Soffietti now recalled the whole, and acknowledged the communication to be perfectly correct. He had been wholly unknown to Mr. Home till within three hours of the message being given ; and not one of the remaining guests knew of the incident in question."—(Narrative of the Countess Panigai, in "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," pp. 380–385.)

To explain away such testimony as the above is beyond the power of any theorist. Even the amusing persons who, like the *Athenæum* reviewer of June 2, 1888, look on Home as "a man who had remarkable skill in turning to his own use all the machinery of mesmerism and thought-reading," would hardly contend that he could have read in the minds of persons present at his séances events that had occurred in their families, but of which they were ignorant, or incidents of their own childhood which they had forgotten.

The third and last séance described by Dr. Garth Wilkinson was one of many which took place in the summer of 1855, at Ealing Villa, Ealing, the residence of Mr. John S. Rymer and his family, whose guest Mr. Home was at the time. I have given in my former work (page 49) Dr. Wilkinson's account of a message received by him on this occasion from a departed friend, and of its remarkable sequel. The séance occu-

pied about an hour ; and on the manifestations ceasing, a second was held :—

“ The circle was broken up and reconstituted,” says Dr. Wilkinson, “ nine persons, to the best of my recollection, being arranged at the table. The table was placed opposite a window, and the bright moonbeams streamed down upon its side. There was no candle in the apartment. The space of table which fronted the window was not occupied by sitters ; but the company sat round about three-fourths of it, leaving the rest vacant. The right wing of the party was terminated by Mr. Home, the left by the son of the host. In a few minutes’ time, close beside the latter gentleman there emerged into sight above the rim of the table, in the vacant space, a delicately beautiful female hand and part of the forearm, apparently of ghostly tenuity. As I was sitting exactly opposite the vacant space, I had a fair opportunity of watching this hand as it projected against the moonlight ; it was a filmy-looking woman’s hand, with the fingers drooping forwards from left to right as I sat. The hand curved up over the table-margin, deliberately grasped a hand-bell placed near, and carrying it partly down, let it drop upon the floor. It then rose to sight again, and took away a cambric handkerchief also placed near, which was tied in two knots under the table and presented to one of the company, who had been strongly moved from the time that this hand was first seen. I forbear to give the further details of this hand, because they seemed to be of a private nature ; suffice it to say, that it caused no little emotion to a gentleman who seemed concerned.”

A second hand appeared—this time near Mr. Home ; and then a third rose into sight between the table and the moonlit window. “ Presently,” writes Dr. Wilkinson, “ a fourth hand ascended on the extreme left ” (once more appearing at that extremity of the crescent of sitters remote from Mr. Home),—“ a lady’s hand of beautiful proportions—and traversed the entire vacant space from left to right, rising, and displaying the forearm ; and then, as it neared Mr. Home, the entire arm. When it reached him, the hand was level with his forehead, upon which it laid its palm, and with its fingers put his hair back and played upon his brow for perhaps half a minute. I was sitting next but one to him, and leant forward past my intermediate neighbour, at the same time requesting that, if the hand belonged to my friend Mrs. —<sup>1</sup>, it might also be laid on my forehead. This was deliberately done ; and I felt its thrilling impression as the palm was laid flat upon my brow, where it remained for several seconds. It was warm and human, and made of no material but softest flesh. During the interval in which I felt it, I had abundant opportunity of examining most closely the arm and forearm. . . . Bending over, as I did, to the vacant rim of the table, I saw how the arm terminated

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<sup>1</sup> From whom Dr. Wilkinson had received a communication earlier in the séance.

—apparently in a graceful cascade of drapery, much as though an arm were put out through the peak of a snowy tent, the apex of which thus fell around the shoulder on every side. On leaving my forehead, the arm at once disappeared. . . .

“These events occurred in the house of one of my oldest friends” (Mr. J. S. Rymer), “whose superior in integrity I have never known, and of whose talent and sagacity I never heard a doubt entertained, until he endorsed these unpopular manifestations.

“Such is my experience. One hope I have in putting it forward is, that others who have seen Mr. Home may do the like, and thus make their contribution to the facts of the case.”

Dr. Garth Wilkinson’s hope that his courage in leading the way might embolden other investigators of the year 1855 to publish their experiences with Home, was only imperfectly justified by results. Mr. Trollope came forward with that testimony *to the reality of the phenomena* which I have elsewhere quoted; and one or two persons of less note wrote letters to the newspapers affirming both the genuineness of the manifestations and their belief in their spiritual origin. Sir E. B. Lytton, however, was timorously silent, and other distinguished inquirers imitated his timidity.

Early in 1857 Dr. Wilkinson’s example was followed, and his testimony confirmed, by Home’s Ealing host, Mr. J. S. Rymer, who published a pamphlet entitled “Spirit Manifestations.” This little *brochure* has come into my hands since writing my former volume; and I am now able to present some extracts from Mr. Rymer’s testimony.

At one of the séances in his house Mr. T. A. Trollope and Sir D. Brewster were present. The latter subsequently implied that no opportunities for thorough investigation had been allowed him—a statement which Mr. Trollope contradicted in a letter to Mr. Rymer. I have quoted in my former work (page 39) the portion of it referring to Sir D. Brewster’s misrepresentations. Mr. Rymer gives an account of this séance in his pamphlet, and also some notes of its incidents made by his brother at the time. The testimony of the Messrs. Rymer agrees in every point with that of

Mr. Trollope, and directly controverts the assertions of Brewster.

"There was no cloth or drapery of any kind on the table," writes Mr. J. S. Rymer. "Sir David was invited to look under the table and make every investigation; and he did most properly avail himself of the opportunity afforded him."

The evidence of the second Mr. Rymer details the various movements of the table, and states that the phenomenon of alteration in its weight was witnessed on this occasion, and investigated by Sir D. Brewster, who admitted, according to Mr. Rymer, that "the table was made light and heavy at command."

In my former work (pp. 51, 52), I have given the narrative of a séance at Ealing, at which Sir E. B. Lytton was present. Mr. Rymer's account of the same séance agrees exactly with that taken by me from the "Incidents." Like Mr. Home, he does not name Lytton; but the references made to him as "a distinguished novelist" and "the writer of Z——" (Zanoni) would be sufficient to identify their object, even without the passage in one of Lytton's letters to Home that speaks of his visiting Ealing. It appears that the inquirer was accompanied on that occasion by his son, the present Lord Lytton. Mr. B. Coleman, a neighbour of the Rymers at Ealing, was also present at the séance, and subsequently wrote an account of it to a Spiritualist journal. In this letter he showed less regard to the desire of Lytton to remain incognito than Home and Rymer had done, and referred to "the writer of Z——" by name.

"One evening," states Mr. Rymer in his pamphlet, "a gentleman was present, to whom it was intimated through the alphabet by knocks on the table that his aunt *Dorothy* was present. He was surprised, and assured us that it could not be so; for he never had an aunt. He afterwards wrote to his sister, who was residing in the north of England, and this was her reply:—

"I never heard of our father having a sister; but I expect to see my elder sister, who knows more of our family, and I will ask her.

"P.S.—She has just come, and I find *our father had a sister—*

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our grandfather was twice married; by his first wife he had one daughter, whose name was *Dorothy*, and who, of course, was our aunt."

Another evening, at Ealing Villa, Mr. Rymer entered the dining-room while a séance was being held.

"I found seated at my long table," he says, "my wife, my second son, Mr. Home, and two friends. I stood for a few moments at the end of the table. My attention was immediately arrested by sounds: it was stated to be my little boy who had passed away some years ago. I asked if he recollected how pleased he was, when on earth, to place me a chair on my return home. The chair was immediately moved round the corner of the table, and, by no visible agency, it was placed behind me, and I sat down upon it.

"This was in the presence of five persons—one of whom was the editor of a well-known work, 'Occult Sciences.' There was neither deception nor delusion. All at the table saw the chair moved to where I was standing. The hands of all were on the table; no one knew that I intended to ask for a chair, and until that moment I did not know it myself.

"I had heard of spirit-writing in America. I asked if the unseen being could write as on earth; he answered that he would try. I then took from my wife's writing-desk a sheet of note-paper, clean and without any writing on it of any description. I borrowed a pencil from a friend who was at the table. The table had its usual cloth; on this I placed the paper and pencil. Both moved as if by a breath of air; the brass fastenings of my table were then displaced one by one, and fell to the ground. The table was opened or pulled out—by no human agency, every one in the room being seated at the table, and having their hands on its surface."

Mr. Rymer inquired if he should place the paper and pencil on the table near the opening under the cloth, made by pulling apart the dining-table in question. Three sounds signified "Yes."

"I did so," he writes, "and immediately the form of a small hand was seen under the cloth. It was felt by some who placed their hands upon it. The paper and pencil were then removed; the form of the hand disappearing at the same time. In a few minutes the same form of a hand was again seen replacing the paper and the pencil; and the alphabet was called for:—'*Dear papa, I have really done my best.*'

"I removed the paper and pencil, and on that paper was written, '*Dear papa, dear mama. Wat.*' Watty was the name of my child. No one was aware that I intended to ask for this to be done. It

was not prearranged even by myself; it was the thought of the moment."

Attached to the house of the Rymer was a large garden, in which Home—then almost a boy in years—spent much of his time with the younger members of the family.<sup>1</sup> In this garden was gathered the clematis out of which Miss Emma Rymer fashioned the wreath which, a few hours later, unseen hands placed on the head of Mrs. Browning. In the same garden another wreath of flowers was made by the Rymer children while playing there, which similarly became the subject of a spirit-manifestation.

It was a fine summer's evening, and Mr. B. Coleman, who in the year 1855 was a neighbour of the Rymer at Ealing, had been walking in their garden with the children of the family and Mr. Home. Fourteen years later he described to the Dialectical Society the phenomena of that evening:—

"I was walking round my neighbour's garden," said Mr. Coleman, "one fine summer evening, when the full moon was above the horizon. Mr. Home, who was present, suggested that we should have a 'sitting,' as he felt impressed (he said) that something remarkable would occur. He had been playing with the children in the garden, who had made for him a wreath of flowers. The drawing-room, to which we retired, was level with the garden. The centre table (a circular one) was cleared of its books and cover, and seven persons, myself included, sat round three parts of it, leaving the fourth part blank, opposite to the window. There was light enough from the moon to enable us to see each other, as well as every object between us and the window. *I asked Mr. Home to place both his hands in mine, which he did, and I continued to hold them thus throughout the séance.*"

The Rymer children had playfully placed on Home's head the wreath of flowers they had woven.

"Mr. Home suddenly exclaimed," says Mr. Coleman, "'See! they are taking the wreath off my head,' and we then all saw the wreath floating slowly round without any visible support. It came up to me; I took

<sup>1</sup> Children were always attracted to Home, and he took pleasure in joining them in their joyous parties.

it, placed it on my own head, and retained possession of it."

A hand-bell had been placed upon the table.

"A hand and arm of feminine proportions," stated Mr. Coleman, "were observed to rise from beneath the blank side of the table, which, reaching towards the bell, took it up and rang it, and carried it from our sight."

This, while the witness who made the statement was still holding in his two hands the two hands of Mr. Home.

The séance was the second at which this Coleman had been present. He was not yet a Spiritualist, and was far indeed from being that which he became many years afterwards—an enthusiast of the unfortunate order which accepts without examination every marvel offered to it. As his evidence before the Dialectical Society shows, he investigated narrowly the manifestations which converted him to a belief in Spiritualism—the manifestations witnessed by him in the year 1855 at séances with Home. The first, like the second of those séances, took place at the house of the Rymers; and among the phenomena witnessed was the carrying of an accordion by spirit-hands from sitter to sitter. Says Mr. Coleman:—

"The accordion was pressed against my knee. I pushed back my chair to make room for it, when the accordion steadily rose up above the table, and I took it in my hand. I then did as Mr. Home had done—rested it upon my knee—requesting that it might play for me 'Angels ever bright and fair.' Immediately I felt that it was strongly tugged; and, after being successively elongated and compressed, the required melody flowed forth with variations while the instrument remained in my hand. This astounding fact awakened my mind to a thorough conviction that a mysterious something, wholly external to Mr. Home, was concerned in the production of the phenomenon. I was not, however, then prepared to believe that it was a spirit that produced it, but from that moment I was led on to investigate the subject."

While Home was still their guest, the Rymers went to pass a few weeks at the seaside, and he accompanied



them. Another member of the party was Miss Fawcett, of 22, Craven Hill, Bayswater, a friend of Mrs. Rymer. The spot selected for their stay was Sandgate. Writing the November following from Brighton to Home in Florence, Miss Fawcett says :—

“The pebble beach here reminds me of Sandgate, but at Brighton is not at all attractive: one must always be on company behaviour, and not throw stones at one another or run into the sea. . . . Our party consists of two Puseyite clergymen and their wives; the ‘Paterfamilias’ is a most obstinate unbeliever in all Spiritual manifestations—yet for all this I seem a small favourite of his.”

The writer’s words evidently imply that she was far from sharing the unbelief in question. Her faith was due to the manifestations which she had witnessed a few months before at Ealing and Sandgate.

Miss Fawcett was present at two séances held with Home at Sandgate, and described by Mr. Rymer in his pamphlet :—

“At Sandgate in Kent,” he writes, “we numbered thirteen. . . . The accordion was played. The tune was not known to any of us. We asked the name, and were told that it was the ‘Song of the Sea.’ A hand and arm in white drapery appeared; it was seen by all at the table on several occasions during the evening, and they had every opportunity of carefully examining it.

“A few evenings afterwards the table was near the window. It was twilight. . . . The accordion was played: the tune was new to us. We were told by means of the alphabet that it was the ‘Song of the Angels to the Mourners.’ . . . A hand appeared above the table, and took from the dress of one of the party a miniature brooch, and handed it to several at the table. Hands and arms were then distinctly seen by all at the table, of different forms and sizes: sometimes crossed as if in prayer, and at other times pointing upwards.”

I pass over Mr. Rymer’s references to still other séances, in which the phenomena resembled those previously witnessed and described by him, in order to quote some of the concluding words of his pamphlet :—

“We have not only seen hands and arms, but they have been repeatedly felt by all at the table as distinctly as though they were the hands and arms of living mortals.”

The witness who gave this testimony was a London solicitor in considerable practice — a profession not generally looked upon as calculated to foster the growth of a spirit of credulity.

“You were the means, in the hands of God,” writes Mr. Rymer to Mr. Home, April 25, 1859, “of bringing me to a knowledge of myself, of convincing me of immortality and of the truths of the Bible, and that it is the voice of the Almighty speaking from His throne, and that in it are the issues of life and death; and I have ever since held it in the greatest reverence, and have striven to guide my actions by its precepts and commandments. . . . If it were not for the faith that is in me, and for the light the Bible casts around my path, I could not walk as I now do through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. . . . For these feelings and for these hopes I am indebted to you; and through good report and through evil report I have never hesitated both publicly and privately to proclaim the truth.”

In my former work (page 48) I have referred to the circumstances which led Mr. Rymer to form the resolution of leaving England for Australia, and have given a few words from the letter in which Mrs. Rymer thanks Home for the aid that enabled her and her children to follow. “May you be spared yet many years,” she writes to him from Sandhurst, January 25, 1864, “to comfort those who sorrow, to heal many broken hearts—to be blessed in all things.”

Some letters from Mrs. Rymer’s friend Miss Fawcett have been preserved, and besides proving the entire faith of the writer in Spiritualism, give tantalising glimpses of other Spiritualists of the Ealing circle, whose identity is uncertain and whose experiences are unrecorded:—

“Will you be able to come to us for a visit on your arrival?” she writes to Home at a time when he was thinking of returning from Florence to England. “The friends who announced in the *Morning Advertiser* that they should be ‘ever proud to welcome you as a friend and brother’ would like to show the world that what they said was true, and these same brother and sister friends want to have the pleasure of your dear society once more.”

Who these friends were Miss Fawcett does not say, nor does she give the surname of the "Theodore" concerning whom she writes to Home, on the 23rd of January, 1856:—

"Theodore has been very busy and studious lately. On the 1st of next month he brings out a *Spiritual Herald*, to be a record of facts in Spiritual intercourse. I shall sometimes write in it."

The journal which "Theodore" was to edit, and to which Miss Fawcett expressed her intention of contributing, duly came into being in February, 1856, but expired within six months. So very few of my readers can ever have seen a copy of the *Spiritual Herald*, that there needs no apology for disinterring from its long-forgotten pages one or two records of séances with Mr. Home.

In the number for March, 1856, the following narrative appeared from the pen of a Mr. Bird:—

"GREAT MALVERN, Feb. 11, 1856.

"In May last, being at the house in the country of a gentleman of distinction, I met Mr. Home, who had then only just arrived from America. After dinner, at about nine o'clock, Mr. Home proposed that himself, I, and a gentleman present should go upstairs in the dark. We did so, and stationed ourselves in a tapestried chamber. We stood and joined hands, remaining some time in silence. At length, on being questioned by Mr. Home, 'the spirits' made us aware of their presence by very loud raps all about the room, on the furniture, oaken ceiling, and floor. We moved into the state drawing-room, *our hands joined*, and standing there these extraordinary noises were more remarkable and more manifest—scratchings on the furniture, raps and thumps on the tables and ceiling, sounds as of many feet which gradually approached us, until we were literally encompassed with these tramping sounds.

"We adjourned to the library, and numbering seven, two of the party ladies, sat down to a large and heavy round table, placing our hands on it. We had loud raps from all parts of this table and from the oaken book-cases. . . .

"I desired to know if they would give us some music. Reply, 'Yes.' One of the ladies brought a guitar, and placed it under the table; as the table was large it was easily seen. Presently the strings were faintly agitated; the sounds gradually became louder, and *a tune was fairly played out by invisible means*. I observed the instrument to move twice, but I am sure no one touched it. After this,

the heavy table at which we were sitting gradually rose from the floor, our hands resting upon it, and remained in a state of suspension for some time. This was succeeded by a vibration in the table, which was communicated to our bodies and the chairs upon which we were sitting, as if some powerful fluid were escaping. The sensation as of the grasp of a hand was felt on the knee of two of the party successively, followed by very loud raps from the table. A little before twelve o'clock we removed to a room upstairs, and took our seats at a large square table."

Mr. Bird now proceeds to describe, with all the emphasis of italics, an incident which marked this midnight resumption of the séance. I copy his account, omitting the italics. He was sitting, he says, next to a lady who, like himself, was on a visit to the country-seat of the anonymous but distinguished host—an antique mansion apparently, to judge by the tapestried walls and oaken ceilings—when suddenly:—

"We were both of us," he writes, "together with the chairs on which we were sitting, forced violently from the table nearly to the end of the room. I tried to resist this, but without success. The table followed us, leaving the rest of the circle behind it. Our host, who is a learned and most accomplished gentleman, watched the phenomenon with a jealous eye, and is satisfied that there could have been no trickery. He leaves it for science to explain. I am convinced there could have been no collusion or delusion.—JOHN JAMES BIRD."

Mr. Bird gives May, 1855, as the date of the above séance. In May, 1855, Mr. Home went on a visit to Sir E. B. Lytton at Knebworth. Were these respectively the host and country-seat referred to by Mr. Bird?

In the *Spiritual Herald* for May, 1856, the initials "H. C." are appended to a lengthy narrative of several séances with Mr. Home. "H. C." appears to have been a Mrs. Helen Clarke of Swakeleys, Uxbridge, one or two of whose letters to Mr. Home (chiefly invitations and requests for séances) have been preserved among his correspondence.

I append the more interesting portions of the letter of "H. C." to the *Spiritual Herald*:—

"On the arrival of Mr. Home in this country, I was invited to meet him at a friend's house, and was much interested by his perfectly natural amiability of manner and entire absence of anything like pretension. We formed a party of nine, and after tea sat down to a large round table in the drawing-room, where any preparation to be made by Mr. Home was out of the question."

Vibrations of the table, &c., alterations in the weight of objects, and the playing of an accordion by unseen hands were the earlier phenomena of the séance. Concerning the latter manifestation "H. C." writes:—

"There was spelled out through the alphabet, 'We will represent earth and heaven;' which was expressively done by a succession of discords, with occasional snatches of harmony, dying away by a long-sustained note into silence, succeeded by a most delicate and harmonious strain."

A mother and daughter were of the party, whose experiences are thus narrated:—

"On beginning to speak, while in the trance, Mr. Home addressed himself to the lady whose daughter was with her, mentioning the child who had manifested his presence, whose name, we were told, was George—but of whom Home said, with a puzzled look, 'He says Doady.' The mother's start, on hearing the child's own way of naming himself, was too remarkable and too natural to be passed over, and when he further described a peculiarity of the child's, in patting his own puffed-out cheeks when he wanted to kiss his mother, she was quite overcome by her recognition of these facts. . . .

"A fortnight after the date of the above sitting, I again met Mr. Home at the same house, the party consisting in all of fifteen persons, one of them being a very intelligent M.D., who declared his honest scepticism."

This sceptical but, unfortunately, anonymous investigator felt the grasp of an unseen hand, which a message given through the alphabet declared to be that of a departed relative of his. Following this manifestation, says "H. C.:"—

"Mr. Home was entranced, and described to the above gentleman" (the sceptical M.D.) "the relative, by name, who had communicated with him, whose characteristics of high intellect combined with great timidity he recognised perfectly; and which, in an extremely interesting manner, Home enacted, giving the peculiar timid shrinking, and even the habit which, in life, she had contracted of pressing back the hair from the temple with the fingers.

"On a subsequent occasion, at the same friend's house," continues "H. C.," "I made a *mental* inquiry as to whether any spirit was present whom I had known in life, which was immediately followed by an affirmative response—viz., three raps on the table close to me. I then requested that the presence might be made evident by touch, which was almost immediately complied with. I further requested (be it understood, always *mentally*),<sup>1</sup> that, if possible, the touching might be on my hand, and placed my right hand open, with the palm upwards, on my knee, when my wish was gratified in the most sensible manner by pappings with the fingers on about an inch or two of the ends of mine; the sensation was so natural that I could not help feeling certain that I was right in supposing that I recognised the individuality of the fingers.

"At another friend's house, where I again met Mr. Home on two occasions, I *saw* several spirit-hands. The table had been so arranged as that about a yard and a half of that part nearest the windows was free of sitters; and I sat opposite to one of the windows. I should observe that the time was between eight and ten o'clock in the evening of a day in the middle of July, and that we had no artificial light in the room. Hearing some one say, 'I see the hand,' I moved so as to get the vacant part of the table as much as possible between me and the dark space between the windows, expecting it to appear as a luminous or phosphorescent substance; but, as I could not see it, I again moved my position, and was greatly astonished at seeing a small female hand, as distinct and palpable as if a real hand was held between me and the light. It took up a ring which was lying near it, and dropped it again on the table. It moved along the edge of the table, and the fingers had all the motions of a real, living hand. It was ascertained, through the alphabet, to be the hand of a late sister of our host. . . .

"The hand again appeared, and passing along the edge of the table, it rose up gradually until the sleeve was visible quite up to the elbow, and rested on the shoulder of Mr. Home: it then slowly disappeared.

"On the next and last occasion when I met Mr. Home, three hands appeared as distinctly as that I have just described.

"I had heard several times of a current of cool air passing over the hands as they rested on the table, but had not felt it. On this occasion, however, I distinctly felt the current of air across the backs

<sup>1</sup> Compare this portion of "H. C.'s" narrative with Mr. Varley's account of his first séance. (See "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," pp. 227-229.)

of my hands, as strong as when one blows with the mouth gently, when the hand is at the distance of three or four inches."

From the date given—the middle of July, 1855—and the fact that both Mr. Rymer and Mr. Coleman refer to an incident resembling that of the ring lifted by the spirit-hand, the last séance but one described by "H. C." would seem to have been held with the Rymers at Ealing—a locality within easy reach of Uxbridge, where Mrs. Helen Clarke resided.

I have commented on the fact that very few of the investigators of the manifestations whose experiences were contemporaneous with those of Dr. Garth Wilkinson had the courage to respond to his appeal to them to supplement the evidence he had published by bearing testimony in their turn. Fifteen years after the appearance of his pamphlet, another name was added to the few that had been given at the time. Like Dr. Wilkinson, the witness was a medical man. I refer to Dr. Wyld, a well-known London physician, who stated publicly at the Beethoven Rooms, Harley Street, on January 9, 1871 :—

"I was one of the very earliest to witness the manifestations which accompanied Mr. Home, and from that time up to the present I have never had any reason to alter my impressions as to the cause of these phenomena.

"The only difference betwixt myself and the usual Spiritualist is—that the ordinary Spiritualist believes that these phenomena are produced by the power of the spirits of departed individuals; I believe they are produced by the spirits of the living individuals present."

An investigator of a different way of thinking writes to Mr. Home from Wolverhampton, on July 22, 1855 :—

"Since my return home, I have thought very much of the manifestations of spiritual agency which I had the pleasure of witnessing at Ealing last week, and cannot resist the temptation of writing a line or two, to tell you how highly I appreciate the privilege which

I then enjoyed. I had never been brought before so *sensibly* into contact with the spirit-world ; and had I been a disbeliever previously (which I am thankful to say I was not), I feel that all my scepticism must have been removed. As it is, however, my previous convictions have been greatly strengthened, and I hope that the influence mentally and spiritually will be all for good. . . .—Yours very sincerely,  
W. R. LOWE."

At the time of writing my former work, I was not aware that Mr. Newton Crosland, of Blackheath near London, to whom Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall owed their introduction to Spiritualism,<sup>1</sup> had published an account of his own early experiences. This narrative originally appeared in pamphlet form in 1856—only a year after the séances at Ealing—and was republished, with additions, by Mr. Crosland, in 1873. I take from it his description of his first séance with Home :—

"The following occurred at the house of Mr. Rymer of Ealing :—

"Ten persons—I being one of the party—sat round three sides of a large dining-table ; the fourth side, nearest to the window, was left vacant, that all those present might have an opportunity of seeing the expected manifestations by the aid of the dim twilight which entered the window. We commenced our sitting at nine o'clock in the evening of the 24th July, 1855. A wreath of jasmine and mignonette made expressly for the purpose, in obedience to a previous request of the spirits, was laid at the edge of the unoccupied side of the table. After remaining quiet for about five or ten minutes, we saw rise up between the window and the table, and about four or five feet from me, a gracefully-formed female hand, with drapery falling from the wrist. The hand was solid and opaque, for wherever it passed across the window it eclipsed our view beyond. I also observed that the hand moved, not like a severed limb, but easily, as if it belonged to and was supported by a body.<sup>2</sup> After repeated wavings, as if making signals to bid us be attentive and calm, the hand deliberately took up the wreath, carried it round outside the circle of visitors, and placed it on the head of a dear friend of mine, who was sitting next but one to me. I must confess that when I witnessed this act I felt some trepidation ; but I soon recovered my equanimity ; and the ultimate effect of my acquaintance with the spiritual phenomena was to render me extremely composed whenever I was present at such manifestations, and to remove all dread of death and of the supernatural.

<sup>1</sup> See "D. D. Home : His Life and Mission," page 205.

<sup>2</sup> Many critics of these phenomena fail to understand that the Spiritualist does not regard them as apparitions of disconnected hands floating in the air, but as belonging to a spiritual body, only the hand of which had been rendered visible.



"I may here remark that, when the hand holding the wreath passed out of the plane of the window, I lost sight of the proportions of the moving figure in the darkness of the room; it then appeared more like an ash-coloured, shadowy form advancing in a curve towards me. *On subsequent occasions I had opportunities of touching these hands—they felt like soft human flesh. If we clutched them they melted away.* . . . I witnessed many other marvels at Ealing. I may as well add that I took good care to be certain that I was not deceived by any trickery."

Mr. Crosland, as will be seen from his narrative, became a Spiritualist. His convictions were shared by his wife, Mrs. Camilla Crosland, who has expressed her Spiritual beliefs both in prose and verse.

Writing on May 26, 1868, from Lynton Lodge, Blackheath, to Mr. Home on the subject of the Lyon suit, judgment in which had just been given, Mrs. Crosland says:—

"I do hope that the sympathy and regard of your old friends will not be thought a vain impertinence just now. Through all the trouble of the last few months we have had frequent news of you from dear Mrs. Ritchie and others, but while you were in the thick of the storm I felt unwilling to intrude. Now, however, that you know the worst, I feel it a sort of duty to tell you the anxious interest we have taken in the late proceedings. As for that wretched woman, I should think she must be too hardened to be conscious of the scorn and disgrace she has brought on herself. Perhaps worse than loss of fortune would have been to entertain feelings of gratitude and obligation to a person so capable of meanness and falsehood. She professed to confer independence, but it was an independence that forged chains for slavery; and after all, my dear Mr. Home, you ought to be congratulated on your emancipation from such thralldom."

Among the correspondence of Mr. Home I find a letter that supplies me with the name of another of the inquirers present at Ealing, and with a declaration of the writer's convictions. It was addressed to Home on the eve of his journey to Florence by the Countess Angèle Rothkint, wife of an Austrian officer then at Milan:—

"EALING, August 12, 1855.

"DEAR MR. HOME,—Although I very much should have liked to have shaken hands with you, and wished you a happy journey and prosperous return to Ealing, I forbear calling, as I am sure your time

must be fully taken up with your kind friends. I fear you are still weak and poorly after your late attack of illness, and I trust that the air of the South may relieve your suffering as for the body. As for the mind, I believe that your warmest friends can wish for you no state happier and better in this world than that which you possess; and pray remember, when you feel ruffled by the unkindness and injustice of some, how many there are who think of you with brotherly kindness. . . .

"If you go to Milan, will you write to me here in time for me to send a letter to Milan, as Count Rothkint has just been sent there with his regiment, and I should much like you to meet. *What would I give for him to believe all I do!* Yours sincerely and gratefully,  
ANGELE ROTHKINT."

Still another of the investigators present at séances with Home during the year 1855 was Sir Charles Isham, Bart., of Lamport Hall, Northampton,<sup>1</sup> a letter from whom appeared in the London *Critic* of November 15, 1855. I extract the portion that refers to Mr. Home:—

"May I be allowed," wrote Sir C. Isham, "to corroborate the facts recorded in the late numbers of your journal, as having also, with some variations, occurred in a house I lately occupied in London, and in the houses of friends; not only during the attendance of Mr. Home in presence of myself and others, but on three several occasions a hand was distinctly felt by three persons, each of them an unbeliever, some hours after he had left the house."

It cannot be said that the style of Sir C. Isham is lucid, but the meaning of his testimony is fortunately apparent, and the fact he narrates is certainly a remarkable one, though not unique; for it often happened that manifestations continued after the departure of Home. I recall that on one occasion, in St. Petersburg, Professor von Boutlerow experimented with the phenomenon of the alteration of an object in weight, the séance being over and Home no longer present; and

<sup>1</sup> A small pocket-diary of the year 1855 contains entries which fix the exact date of this acquaintance. Home records that Sir C. Isham called on him, at Cox's Hotel, on Wednesday, April 11th, and that he returned the visit on Monday, April 23rd. Another séance was held at Sir C. Isham's on May 7, 1855.

that he established the fact of the weight varying as he alternately requested that the object should become heavier or lighter.

The Rev. William Lambert of Ealing was present on one occasion at a séance in Ealing Villa. "I readily admit," he wrote to the *Dispatch* of October 7, 1855, "that, on one evening at Mr. Rymer's house, I witnessed facts which surprised me and excited my curiosity. But," adds the reverend gentleman—anxious, above all things, to vindicate the orthodoxy of his attitude towards the facts in question—"I never expressed any opinion as to the agency which produced them."

He was more considerate than another of his cloth, the rector of Wortley in Yorkshire, of whom Miss Fawcett writes to Home, October 13th, 1855, that he "upsets with much good sense and ability all the absurd philosophy of those who discredit the reality of the phenomena; but from this he rushes into the arms of his Satanic Majesty, and declares the whole thing to be 'the devil's modern masterpiece.' He justifies and proves this by all he has witnessed. My correspondence with him has not as yet gone further than to state that all *my* personal acquaintance with Spiritualism has, from *its* nature and character, led me to an entirely opposite conclusion."

Miss Fawcett's opinion of Spiritualism had been formed at séances with Mr. Home. Whether her correspondent, the rector of Wortley, had been fortunate enough to attend any of those séances she does not directly mention; but various passages of her letters would seem to show that he had pursued his inquiries elsewhere, and that the "manifestations" he witnessed were probably nothing more than some of the follies and impostures which have attempted to simulate the true phenomena.

The difference between those who know nothing of the séances of Home and those who have repeatedly and searchingly investigated the manifestations witnessed in his presence cannot be more strikingly illus-

trated than by two quotations from Mr. W. Crookes, F.R.S. In "Spiritualism Viewed by the Light of Modern Science," he has placed on record the opinion that he held *before* commencing his series of séances with Mr. Home. "Like other men who thought little of the matter and saw little," he wrote, "I believed that the whole affair was a superstition, or at least an unexplained trick." In the expectation of being able to demonstrate to Spiritualists the folly of their faith, he commenced his investigations with Home—and wrote to Home on April 12, 1871 :—

"Pray do not hesitate to mention me as one of the firmest believers in you. Half a dozen such séances as that of last night, with a few picked scientific men, and the scientific recognition of these truths would be as undoubted as are the facts of electricity."

The "superstition or unexplained trickery" of 1870 had become the *truths* of 1871 ! There was nothing changed in Home or Spiritualism ; but a revolution had been wrought in the mind of Mr. Crookes ; and the potent agent that had brought it to pass was patient, unprejudiced inquiry into facts.

## CHAPTER IV.

*FLORENTINE SÉANCES AND OTHERS.*

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE never was present at a séance with Home, but he has done more to preserve a record of Home's Florentine séances in 1855-6 than almost any of the persons at whose entreaty they were held.

Going to Florence as the guest of Mrs. Trollope, Mr. Home at once became the theme of all tongues among the cosmopolitan society which the autumn of 1855 saw gathered on the banks of the Arno.

"You are a greater event in Florence," writes Lady K. Fleming to him (Nov. 2, 1855), "than an overflow of the Arno or a revolution. At the club, in the drawing-room, in the servants' hall—court and town—the first question, before even 'Good morning,' is—'Mr. Home: Have you seen him? What has he done? Do you believe?' &c., &c."

"I do not ask you to come to see me, for I know you have not time; and as you promised to do so as soon as possible, I trust to you not to forget me. Have you seen Lord Normanby yet? What wonders have you performed?"

Facts that have no chronicler but the thousand tongues of society are "writ in water;" and although Florence talked of nothing but Home, rushed to the houses where he was to be met, and besieged him with entreaties for séances, Florence contented itself with wondering, investigating, and in some cases believing, and did not take pen and paper to record the phenomena observed. With a few, but, happily, important exceptions, the story of Home's numerous séances in the Tuscan capital remains unwritten; and even the names of the persons present at them are in most cases lost beyond recall. When I have named Princess Lubomirski, the Prince of Saxe-Meiningen, Countess

Antoinette Orsini, Lord and Lady Normanby, Lady Katherine Fleming, the Count and Countess Cotterel, Countess Herbert, Seymour Kirkup, the English artist who spent a long life in Italy; the Powers, the Trollopes, the Crossmans, Mrs. Macdonell, Mr. H. R. Schink, and Mr. Fuller, I have almost completed the list of those whom I can declare with any certainty to have witnessed manifestations at Florence in 1855.

In my previous work<sup>1</sup> I gave some few particulars of the experiences of Countess Orsini and Mr. Powers, and briefly referred to other Florentine investigators. Since then, fresh particulars of this period of Home's life have come into my hands; and it will be my endeavour in the ensuing pages to present these disjointed fragments of testimony in something like a connected form. In some cases the correspondence of Mr. Home enables me to fill up the gaps in the narrative; in others, the hiatus must remain a hiatus still, and the names that are omitted must continue to veil their identity under an initial or a dash. I might supply both names and particulars by trusting to probabilities and conjectures; but it is no part of my plan to do so. My endeavour, in this and my previous work, has consistently been to make no statement that is not based on facts.

Home's visit to Italy was the result, as I have already said, of an invitation given to him at Ealing by Mrs. Trollope. He left England in the early autumn of 1855, in company with the son of Mr. Rymer, and the first weeks of his stay in Florence were passed at the Villino Trollope. One of the first of her friends whom his hostess presented to him was the celebrated American sculptor, Powers; and Powers, in his turn, was the means of introducing Home to the English artist, Kirkup.

Mr. (afterwards Baron) Kirkup had been so long a resident in Florence, that his Italian recollections went back, I believe, to the days of Shelley and Byron. He

<sup>1</sup> "D. D. Home : His Life and Mission," pp. 58-61.

had other claims to distinction besides his ability as an artist; and the title conferred on him towards the close of his life by the Italian Government was a recognition of the services that he had rendered to the country of his adoption by many years of antiquarian and literary research. Such a man must have been both accomplished and intelligent, and the most sceptical will probably admit that his testimony is deserving of attention. The best person to furnish it will be Baron Kirkup himself, and I leave him accordingly to declare the convictions that had been implanted in him by his séances with Home. In a letter dated just seven years after those séances, Kirkup writes to Home as follows:—

“PONTE VECCHIO, FLORENCE, 16th October, 1862.

“MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,—Though you are a young man, I reckon you amongst my old friends, and certainly amongst the dearest, and for whom I have felt the greatest sympathy in joy and in sorrow. I now congratulate you sincerely on the return of your power, more than human as it is, for it has brought the greatest consolation possible, the only real one and perfect one. How highly privileged you are above all others! None have such perfect revelations as you have. Few have any at all, which makes it so difficult for the world to believe it—so much beyond the commonplace experience of mankind. . . .

“I have drawings I made of a hand and arm which were visible to ten persons, you being one.

“Let me again thank you for your most kind letter. Write whenever you can, if it is only two lines.—Truly and affectionately yours,

“S. KIRKUP.”

Several other letters from Kirkup are contained in the portion of Home's world-wide correspondence that has been preserved. The most interesting of the series is dated January 16, 1863, and commences with a reference to testamentary dispositions made by the writer, in the belief that he had not long to remain on earth.

“I have already spoken to Lady Katherine Fleming and to Count Cottetrel,” he tells Home, “to be the guardians of my little girl. If you were living in Florence, I should prefer you, my dear friend, to either of them. . . . I rejoice to hear that you are writing your life; it is of more importance than any king's. Your chief difficulty is the

world's incredulity. It is not to be overcome by mere assertion; you must appeal to *facts*, and have them well certified. Proof is the only defence you can make against the obstinate, vain, ignorant crowd of adversaries ready to spring on you. All your force lies in your truth; do not dilute it by sentiment or preaching. There are plenty of books of fine writing in prose and verse. . . . Yours will have more than any living mortal can produce—the wonders of a new science, of more importance than any of the old ones. The greater the wonder, the more the world will call for *proofs*. Your friends ought to give you notarial certificates of the phenomena they have witnessed by sight, sound, and touch. . . . You have been floating in the air a hundred times; a thousand persons must have seen you. Make them come forward and testify to the truth.

“Foresee your enemies’ tactics, and prepare against them. They cannot conquer *facts*, but they must be undeniably authenticated. I yearn to see you triumphant.

“Let me hear from you when you can; it is always a happiness. I have no such friend as you, and let me assure you of the affection of yours ever,  
SEYMOUR KIRKUP.”

These two extracts seem to me sufficiently conclusive of the spiritual beliefs of Baron Kirkup, and of the feelings with which he regarded Home. He has unfortunately left no record of the manifestations witnessed by him at Florence in 1855; but as he was a friend of Powers (whom he frequently mentions in his letters to Home), it is reasonable to conclude that at various of the séances described by Powers to Nathaniel Hawthorne, Kirkup was also present.

Hawthorne visited Florence three years after Home's stay there; and in the journal which the gifted writer kept during the months of August and September, 1858, there is an interesting record of facts related to him by his countryman Powers and others concerning the séances of Home—a theme on which he had shortly before conversed with Dr. Garth Wilkinson in England. He made also a call on Kirkup while at Florence; and the same journal (afterwards published by Hawthorne under the title of “Note Books in France and Italy”) contains a graphic description of the English artist and his surroundings, and some particulars of the talk which Kirkup had with his American visitor on the subject of Spiritualism. Hawthorne's attitude was naturally



that of a sceptic, but his scepticism was of as original a character as his genius; and more singular comments have seldom been made on the phenomena than those which occur in the "Note Books" concerning the experiences of Powers.

"Mr. Powers (the sculptor) related some things," writes Hawthorne, "that he had witnessed through the agency of Mr. Home, who had held a session or two at his house. He described the apparition of two mysterious hands from beneath a table round which the party were seated. These hands purported to belong to an aunt of the Countess Cotterel, who was present, and were a pair of thin, delicate, aged, lady-like hands and arms, appearing at the edge of the table, and terminating at the elbow in a sort of white mist. One of the hands took up a fan and began to use it. The Countess then said, 'Fan yourself as you used to do, dear aunt'—and forthwith the hands waved the fan back and forth in a peculiar manner, which the Countess recognised as the manner of her dead aunt. The spirit was then requested to fan each member of the party, and accordingly each separate individual round the table was fanned in turn, and felt the breeze sensibly upon his face. During this apparition Mr. Home sat at the table, but not in such a position or within such a distance that he could have put out or managed the spectral hands; and of this Mr. Powers satisfied himself by taking precisely the same position after the party had retired. Mr. Powers did not feel the hands at this time, but he afterwards felt the touch of infant hands, which were at the time invisible. He told of many other wonders, which seem to have as much right to be set down as facts as anything else that depends on human testimony. For example, Mr. R——, one of the party, gave a sudden start and exclamation. He had felt on his knee a certain token, which could have been given him only by a friend long ago in his grave.

"Mr. Powers inquired what was the last thing that had been given as a present to a deceased child; and suddenly both he and his wife felt a prick, as of some sharp instrument on their knees. The present had been a penknife.

"I have forgotten other incidents quite as striking as these; but, with the exception of the spirit hands, they seemed to be akin to those that have been produced by mesmerism, returning the inquirer's thoughts and veiled recollection to himself, as answers to his queries. The hands are certainly an inexplicable phenomenon. Of course they are not portions of a dead body, nor any other kind of substance; they are impressions on the two senses, sight and touch, but how produced I cannot tell. Even admitting their appearance—and certainly I do admit it as freely and fully as if I had seen it myself—there is no need of supposing them to come from the world of departed spirits. Powers seems to put entire faith in the verity of spiritual

communications, while acknowledging the difficulty of identifying spirits as being what they pretend to be. He is a Swedenborgian, and so far prepared to put faith in the phenomena. . . .

"What most astonishes me is the indifference with which I listen to these marvels. They throw old ghost-stories quite into the shade; they bring the whole world of spirits down amongst us, visibly and audibly; they are absolutely proved to be sober facts by evidence that would satisfy us of any other alleged realities; and yet I cannot force my mind to interest itself in them. They are facts to my understanding, which it might have been anticipated would have been the last to acknowledge them, but they seem not to be facts to my intuitions and deep perceptions."

These are surely perplexing avowals. Hawthorne draws very near indeed to the confines of Spiritualism when he declares that he admits the appearance of the spirit hands described to him by Powers "as freely and fully as if I had seen them myself," and that he regards them as "an inexplicable phenomenon—*impressions on the two senses, sight and touch*, but how produced I cannot tell." The reader of such words can only conceive of their writer as standing on the very threshold of belief, and accordingly the startling declaration that follows comes on the mind with all the force of the unexpected. "Admitting their appearance, there is no need of supposing them to come from the world of departed spirits." Where, then, did Hawthorne suppose these bewildering "impressions" to have originated? Did his subtle and peculiar imagination indulge, like Bulwer Lytton, in speculations on the miracle-working powers of human will, or had he anticipated Professor Balfour Stewart in the theory that Home was possessed of such unheard-of mesmeric attributes as to be capable of biologising ten or a dozen persons at a time? Hawthorne could not but feel that his readers would think some statement due to them of the grounds on which he rejected the spiritual origin of the phenomena. A sceptic who refuses to believe that spirit hands ever appeared at the séances of Home is an intelligible being, if hardly an intelligent one; but a sceptic who "freely and fully admits the reality of the manifestations," and who yet declares that there is

no necessity to assign to them a spiritual origin, surely ought to render the world some reason for a denial that appears to conflict with his previous admissions. Hawthorne, however, affords us no explanation; on the contrary, he proceeds to perplex us still further with the extraordinary statement that the marvels he is chronicling have absolutely no attraction for him. They are *facts*—inexplicable, startling facts—but his mind refuses to interest itself in them. This assertion he reiterates in another passage of his journal, as if conscious of the difficulty that the reader would find in comprehending, perhaps in crediting it.

“*September 11th, 1858.*—Mrs. Powers told a very marvellous thing—how that, when Mr. Home was holding a séance in her house, and several persons were present, a great scratching was heard in a neighbouring closet. She addressed the spirit, and requested it not to disturb the company then, as they were busy with their own affairs, promising to converse with it on a future occasion. On a subsequent night, accordingly, the scratching was renewed with the utmost violence; and in reply to Mrs. Powers’ questions, the spirit assured her that it was not *one*, but *legion*, being the ghosts of twenty-seven monks, who were miserable and without hope. The house now occupied by Powers was formerly a convent. . . .

“A great many other wonders took place within the knowledge and experience of Mrs. Powers. She saw not one pair of hands, but many. The head of one of her dead children, a little boy, was laid in her lap, not in ghastly fashion, as a head out of the coffin and grave, but just as the living child might have laid it on his mother’s knees. It was invisible, by the bye, and she recognised it by the features and the character of the hair, through the sense of touch. Little hands grasped hers. In short, these soberly-attested incredibilities are so numerous that I forget nine-tenths of them, and judge the others too cheap to be written down. Christ spoke the truth surely in saying that men would not believe, ‘though one rose from the dead.’ In my own case, the fact makes absolutely no impression. I regret such confirmation.”

“*Christ spoke the truth surely in saying that men would not believe, ‘though one rose from the dead.’*” The honesty of Hawthorne’s avowal makes one pardon the incongruity of his puzzling comments on the phenomena which he was chronicling. The fault of his incredulity, or rather indifference, was in him, then,

and not in them. He admitted them to be facts, for the evidence of Powers, Kirkup, and others concerning their reality was too decisive for him to reject it; but nevertheless they remained incredibilities to him, *for he had not witnessed them himself*. His mind could not grasp what his senses had not testified to. In this incapacity to realise what he had not beheld—this implied avowal that one fact coming within his personal experience would carry fuller conviction than a thousand received on the testimony of others—Hawthorne was in no way different from the majority of men. The exceptional feature of his case is that he should have regarded the phenomena witnessed at Home's séances as facts, even while declaring his inability to conceive of them as such. Men less intellectually gifted content themselves with denying the existence of that which their eyes have not seen and their mind cannot grasp, however overwhelming may be the evidence presented to them that other eyes have seen and other minds have grasped the reality of the facts which they deny. Hawthorne's mind was incapable, however, of ridding itself of the problems presented to it by the simple process of declaring them non-existent, and his half-reluctant, half-unconscious efforts at their solution evidently led him further in the direction of Spiritualism than he was well aware. Had he but visited Florence in the autumn of 1855, instead of that of 1858, his presence at a few séances with Home in the house of Powers might have compelled him to arrive at very definite conclusions concerning the origin of those phenomena which he declared to be inexplicable, and would have certainly rendered the "Note Books in France and Italy" even more interesting than they are.

Not far from the house where Hawthorne lived during his stay at Florence stood the Villa Colombaia—misspelt by him Columbaria. In 1855, and for several years afterwards, the household assembled there included an English lady, Mrs. Georgina Baker, and

her mother and sister, Mrs. and Miss Crossman. It was from Mrs. Baker that Hawthorne received the written narrative of her experiences referred to in the following extract from his "Note Books."

"Within a mile of our villa," he writes, "stands the Villa Columbaria, a large house built round a square court. Like Mr. Powers' residence, it was formerly a convent. It is inhabited by Major Gregorie, an old soldier of Waterloo and various other fights, and his family consists of Mrs. ——" (Mrs. Crossman), "the widow of one of the Major's friends, and her two daughters. We have become acquainted with the family, and Mrs. ——, the married daughter" (Mrs. Georgina Baker), "has lent us a written statement of her experience with a ghost who has haunted the Villa Columbaria for many years back. He had made Mrs. (Baker) aware of his presence in her room by a sensation of cold, as if a wintry breeze was blowing over her; also, by a rustling of the bed-curtains; and at such times she had a certain consciousness, as she says, that she was not alone.

"Through Mr. Home's agency, the ghost was enabled to explain himself, and declared that he was a monk named Giannana, who died a very long time ago in Mrs. ——'s (Baker's) present bed-chamber. He was a murderer, and had been in a restless and miserable state ever since his death, wandering up and down the house, but especially haunting his own death-chamber and a staircase that communicated with the chapel of the villa. All the interviews with this lost spirit were attended with a sensation of severe cold, which was felt by every one present. Mrs. (Baker) saw at one time the fingers of her monk—long, yellow, and skinny. These fingers grasped the hands of individuals with a cold, clammy, and horrible touch."

Although Mrs. Baker only figures in Hawthorne's narrative as "Mrs. ——," her identity with "the married daughter who lent us a written statement of her experiences" is established by circumstances presently to be detailed. Not finding myself able, however, to identify satisfactorily the other tenants of the Colombaia, I addressed myself to Mr. Preston Powers, who kindly replied, informing me that the lady residing in 1855 at the Villa Colombaia with her two daughters ("one of whom," adds Mr. Powers, "I understand became afterwards the Mrs. Baker you refer to") was Mrs. Crossman, a sister of Major Gregorie.

The names that Hawthorne omitted were, therefore,

those of Mrs. and Miss Crossman, and Mrs. Georgina Baker.

I am enabled to lay before the reader a transcript of the very record which Mrs. Baker lent to Mr. Hawthorne. When Home was writing the first volume of "Incidents in My Life," Mrs. Baker sent him her narrative of the manifestations at the Villa Colombaia, but her name was not published in connection with it. The narrative appeared in the "Incidents" (pp. 87-92) as that of "an English resident in Florence," and shared the fate of much other anonymous testimony contributed to the same work, in being treated as a fiction. It will be seen, on comparing it with the summary given by Hawthorne, that he has accurately reproduced the leading particulars of Mrs. Baker's experiences at the Villa Colombaia, though the lady's own description of them is naturally more detailed and interesting.

Mrs. Baker wrote :—

"The house in which I at present reside, and which has been my home for some years past, is a large, rambling, old-fashioned villa in the neighbourhood of Florence, whose internal architecture gives evidence of its having been built at different periods—those periods probably distant from each other.

"The oldest parts of the house, judging from the ornaments of a chapel which forms part of it, must, I should say, have been constructed in the early part of the sixteenth century. The rooms which I occupy are almost immediately above the chapel, and communicate on one side with the lower part of the house by a narrow stone staircase. On first coming to reside here, we learned that the villa had, in common with many others of the same description, the reputation of being haunted. Strange lights, it was said, had been seen issuing from the chapel windows, and unearthly noises heard in that part of the house to which I have alluded. Some friends passed the winter with us five or six years since, and their servant occupied a small room on an *entresol* between the chapel and my rooms; but his rest became so broken, and he described the noises he heard as so peculiar, that he requested to be allowed to sleep elsewhere. I was formerly much in the habit of dismissing my maid early, and sitting up either reading or writing until a late hour. At such times I have been suddenly seized with a strange fearfulness, a kind of nervous dread, more easily imagined than described. In fact, it would be impossible to define my sensations at those moments, further than by saying

that I felt I was no longer *alone*. This feeling usually lasted from five to ten minutes, and invariably left a painful impression on my spirits. I also often heard a peculiar rustling sound in my room and around my bed, as though some one were agitating the bed-curtains, and this sound was invariably accompanied by a chilliness, as if a door had been suddenly opened and a strong current of cold wind had rushed with violence into the room.

"These sounds and the other painful sensations which I have described, and which I was totally unable to explain, continued at intervals with greater or lesser degrees of intensity until the month of October, 1855, when much sensation was created in Florence by the arrival of Mr. Home. A short time after his arrival in Florence, the sounds in my room became more distinct and more frequent, and the very peculiar nervous feelings of which I have spoken were not confined so exclusively to myself, but were frequently shared by my sister, if she remained any time in my room. My rest at length became so broken, and in consequence my health so impaired, that I had my bed removed into a room adjoining the one in which I had been in the habit of sleeping, hoping that the change would bring me quiet.

"The first night was undisturbed, but the next and succeeding nights were so painful that I frequently lay awake until morning. In the meantime we made Mr. Home's acquaintance; and having been a witness of effects so wonderful as only to be ascribed to a supernatural cause, I determined to discover, if possible, through his agency, the real secret of my haunted rooms.

"Mr. Home having been invited to make a stay of a few days in our house, was, on the first day of his arrival, made acquainted with the mystery of my rooms; and he proposed that a séance should be held in them for the purpose of endeavouring to ascertain whether or not the strange sounds which disturbed me were to be attributed to supernatural agency. Accordingly, about eleven o'clock on that same evening, my sister, Mr. Home, and myself repaired to my room, and placed ourselves at a small round table in front of, and very near the fireplace. We were warmly covered, and the fire was blazing brightly; yet the cold that pervaded the room was intense, penetrating to the very bones. I should mention that for many previous days I had suffered from what appeared to be a cold air which was quite independent of the atmospheric temperature, blowing over my body, especially over the lower limbs. This feeling never left me, and all artificial means failed in destroying the sensation of chilliness. This same cold air was now felt by both my sister and Mr. Home to such a degree as to be painful to them also. I have since found that it is a frequent accompaniment of the manifestations.

"Previously to placing himself at the table, Mr. Home had descended to the chapel, where, however, all was quiet. On reascending the stairs, he heard a sound as of a muffled bell tolling in the chapel."

The two ladies and Home had scarcely seated themselves at the table, when indications were given of the presence of a spirit.

"We inquired," says Mrs. Baker, "whether the spirit present were a good one, and were answered in the negative. We spoke in harsh terms, which seemed to irritate the spirit, for the demonstrations became very angry. A high-backed, old-fashioned chair, which stood at a little distance from the table, was suddenly, and without human contact, drawn close to it, as though some one in sitting down had so drawn it. Nothing, however, was visible. Mr. Home proposed that we should move into the next room, my bedroom, and try whether any further manifestations would be made there. We did so; but all remained quiet. We then returned to the room we had just quitted, and sat down at another table covered with a cloth. We had previously heard a rustling sound—such a sound as would be made by a person moving about in a heavy garment. This noise was accompanied by a scratching on the wood of the table, as though some one were scraping it with his nails. We then distinctly saw the cloth on the side of the table next to me move up, as though a hand raised it from beneath. The hand appeared to be in a menacing attitude. Mr. Home was also often touched on the knee, and he described the touch as peculiarly strong and disagreeable.

"We then entreated the spirit to leave us, requiring it should return on the following evening, and declare its purpose in thus tormenting us. This it promised.

"The night was very unquiet. The sensation of cold, of which I have before spoken, accompanied me everywhere, and I heard a frequent scratching under my pillow and on my bed. On the next evening we met again in my room, and were joined by two other persons, one a member of our family,<sup>1</sup> the other a gentleman known to Mr. Home, and who was then investigating these phenomena—both men of strong nerve and dispassionate judgment.

"The usual cold was felt, and the table became much agitated. A small stiletto, which I use as a paper-knife, was taken from the table as by an invisible hand, and drawn from the sheath. The table was then lifted from the ground, and was violently pushed across the room. It stopped opposite a door leading to the staircase, and we resumed our places.

"A small hand-bell was taken from off the table and violently rung in different directions. The dagger was thrown about under the table and rubbed against Mr. Home's knees. My elbow was violently grasped by a hand, the fingers of which I distinctly saw—they were long, yellow, and shining.<sup>2</sup> Other persons present, who felt its grasp, described its touch as clammy and horrible. I spoke

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<sup>1</sup> Probably Major Gregory.

<sup>2</sup> A misprint for "skinny" apparently. Compare Hawthorne's narrative.



gently to the spirit, who, in answer to my questions, said he was unhappy, and that perhaps I might be of some use to him. He promised to return and speak further on the following evening.

"The whole of the next day I was more or less tormented by the cold air, which blew over my face and limbs, especially in the evening, a short time before the hour appointed for the séance. This wind then became very strong, and again a hand raised the cloth of the table on which I was leaning, and touched my arm as if to remind me of my engagement. We repaired to my room, one member only of my family being present, my sister having suffered too much from alarm on the previous evening to join us.

"The demonstrations of the table immediately began, but in a quieter manner than on former occasions. I immediately spoke (I should say that Italian was the only language used<sup>1</sup>) in a soothing manner."

Mrs. Baker's testimony that the whole of the communications with the spirit were carried on in Italian derives importance from the fact that Mr. Home was perfectly ignorant of the language in question. He had only left America a few months before, had passed the spring and summer in England, and had not been above two or three weeks in Italy. It will hardly be contended that in those few weeks he could have acquired sufficient mastery of a language of which he did not speak a word on his arrival in Florence, for him to have comprehended Mrs. Baker's questions and framed in *Italian* the replies which she relates.

"In reply to many questions, the spirit," she writes, "told me he was unhappy, and had wandered about the house for many, many years, that his name was Giannana, that he had been a monk, and had died in the room which I then occupied. I desired to know whether I should have masses said for the peace of his soul. He answered in the negative, but requested that I should pray that it might find some repose. I further begged him to tell me why, on the previous evening, he had made so much use of the little dagger, and he answered that in life he had but too well known how to employ it. He then promised me never again to return to my rooms; and since that evening those painful sensations and strange noises, of which I have spoken so much, have left me, and never have returned."

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<sup>1</sup> "Here the writer omits a rather curious circumstance. The Italian, she observed, was incorrectly spelled; but on afterwards comparing it with the state of the language in the sixteenth century, it was found to be correct."—*Incidents*, p. 91.

Hawthorne makes the following comments on the lady's story:—

"The poor old fellow does not seem to know exactly what he wanted with Mrs. (Baker), but promised to refrain from disturbing her any more, on condition that she would pray that he might find some repose. *Rest, rest, rest, appears to be the continual craving of unhappy spirits*; they do not venture to ask for positive bliss—perhaps, in their utter weariness, would rather forego the trouble of active enjoyment—but pray only for rest."

Even in this life how many spirits put forth the same prayer. Literature, and the literature of the nineteenth century in especial, abounds with expressions of that universal craving. Byron wrote from Italy that the one prayer in which he could join with all his soul was the *Implora pace* of Italian tombstones. Mrs. Browning, in some of her most touching verses, tells us that the most beautiful of all the whispers ever made to man by heavenly voices is—

"He giveth His beloved sleep."

If the desire of rest be so strong with the unhappy on earth, what must it become in the life beyond this, when there is no more hope of finding it in death?

The monk Giannana was not the only spirit who held communication with the inhabitants of the Villa Colombaia.

"After the departure of this ghost," writes Hawthorne, "other séances were held, at which good and holy spirits manifested themselves, and behaved in a very comfortable and encouraging way. It was their benevolent purpose, apparently, to purify her" (Mrs. Baker's) "apartment from all traces of the evil spirit, and to reconcile her to what had been so long the haunt of the miserable monk, by filling it with happy and sacred associations, in which, as Mrs. (Baker) intimates, they entirely succeeded."

For the remaining period of her residence in the villa, at least. Mrs. Baker left the Colombaia about a year after Hawthorne made her acquaintance, and on

the 27th of April, 1860, she wrote from Florence to Home in London :—

“The noises at the villa are worse than ever, and the new proprietor is dreadfully disturbed by them. The house has been exorcised, but without effect. My own rooms are the most disturbed.”

Another manifestation, or rather series of manifestations, attributed to the spirit of a monk, occurred at a later period of Home's life, and in another country. Nearly fourteen years after the séances at the Villa Colombaia, he was on a visit to the late Earl of Dunraven, at Adare Manor, in Ireland. About 10 P.M. on the evening of March 4, 1869, Lord Dunraven and Mr. Home, accompanied by Viscount Adare and Captain Charles Wynne, walked down to the old abbey at Adare. The night was dark and very still. On entering the ruins, Home was entranced. A light played round his head and upon his hands; and presently, saying that he saw a figure beckoning to him, he quitted his companions. Watching him from a little distance, they observed a shadowy form at his side, that moved beside him as he walked. The figure disappeared, and Lord Dunraven, Lord Adare, and Captain Wynne saw Home returning to them—not on the ground, but raised above it. He floated past the three watchers at a height that carried him over a broken wall, two feet high, without his touching it. “The distance that we saw him thus carried,” wrote Viscount Adare, “must have been at least ten or twelve yards.”

It would be impossible, declared Lord Dunraven, to convey in words any just idea of this strange scene, and of the effect produced on the witnesses by its various details—the light shining round Home's head and upon his hands, the strange sounds that were heard, and the apparition of the shadowy figure; while, to add to the eerie effect of what was passing in the abbey, owls and other birds flew round the ruins screaming harshly, and appearing to be in a singularly disturbed state, although the night was perfectly still.

Two nights later the same party revisited the abbey. The monkish spirit did not present himself on this occasion; at least, the few manifestations that occurred were said by Home to have no connection with him. It was noticed that, although a strong wind was blowing, neither that, nor the presence of the visitors, disturbed the owls and other feathered tenants of the ruins. In strange contrast to their behaviour of two nights before, they neither flew about nor screamed.

This Irish monk, like Giannana at Florence, would seem to have been a restless and unhappy spirit. Speaking through Home in the trance, he demanded of Lord Dunraven, "Do you see that tombstone with the light shining upon it?" adding, "It would be better—aye, ten million times better—to lie there in the cold, dark clay, than to spend years upon years, every moment of which is an eternity, in wandering here. Oh, I am weary—so weary!"

The lady to whom the Florentine monk addressed himself, Mrs. Baker (*née* Crossman), published in the year 1862 a short pamphlet,<sup>1</sup> signed "G. B.," and entitled by her, "An Enquiry into the Mystery of Spiritualism, with a Narrative of Personal Experience, by Mrs. Eric Baker"—Eric being the name of her husband. It contains various particulars of communications made from the other world to herself and her friends, and of manifestations witnessed by them, which had no reference to the "house-spirit" of the Colombaia. The séances to which they belonged were held at Florence subsequently to the events already narrated.

"I have had opportunities," wrote Mrs. Baker, "such as have been given to few, of witnessing the manifestations daily for a period of two months; residing under the same roof with a celebrated medium" (Mr. Home). . . . "I will observe that *darkness* is by no means a necessary condition of spiritual séances, inasmuch as some of the most remarkable phenomena which I have witnessed

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<sup>1</sup> "Printed for the Authoress by J. S. Hodson & Son, 22, Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn."

took place at a table in the centre of which a large Carcel lamp was burning during the whole séance, in a room never previously entered by Mr. Home, and with the furniture of which he could not, therefore, be acquainted. He was always careful to place his hands on the table during the manifestations in such a manner that both might be seen, while his feet were always drawn away as far as possible from the table beneath his chair, a circumstance to which (aware of the disposition on the part of many to attribute the phenomena to trick) he frequently drew attention. . . .

"I will relate a fact witnessed by myself and five other persons. An accordion was placed on the ground, but not quite close to the table at which we sat, and at some distance from Mr. Home. After some preliminary chords of singular sweetness, it performed a piece of music actually composed by the father-in-law of one of the circle, a well-known composer and teacher of music in former years—a lady present having been one of his pupils, who immediately recognised the composition. The room was amply lighted all the time. . . .

"I received on one occasion a long, interesting, and even important communication (inasmuch as it threw some light on a family affair which had always been involved in considerable obscurity) from the spirit (for so it declared itself to be) of a very near relation. Unwilling that those present should be made acquainted with the subject of our communication, I held the alphabet in such a manner as to screen it from every one present, while the letters necessary to the formation of the answers were indicated, not by the ordinary raps, but by gentle pressures on my knees. The hands of this spirit were distinctly visible, both to me and several other persons, and not only repeatedly and warmly pressed my own, but, at my request, those of other individuals present.

"On one occasion, our circle being composed of six persons besides Mr. Home, six hands were visible at one and the same moment—those of Mr. Home being in their usual position. The appearance of these hands was perfectly natural; part of the arm was also occasionally seen draped in a kind of gauzy, transparent substance, looking something like the hanging sleeve of a white *peignoir*. The hands were also warm to the touch; *on being strongly pressed, they appeared to dissolve*. I invariably observed that the communications received were accompanied by physical manifestations indicative of the peculiar conditions and occupations of those by whom they were professedly made when on earth (assuming the hypothesis of their being departed spirits). Thus, the near relation of whom I have spoken, at the time of his death an officer in the navy, was always preceded by extraordinary movements on the part of the table, representing with strange exactness the tossing and rolling of a ship, and accompanied by noises imitative of the straining of the masts and creaking of the timbers. An officer who had served in the Crimean War, whose name (which has been much before the world)

is synonymous with all that is to be honoured and esteemed, being on one occasion present, received communications from two brother officers killed in action, which were accompanied by remarkable manifestations in the form of a prolonged rumbling noise, exactly resembling the discharge of artillery, interspersed with the sharp, cracking sounds of occasional musketry. On another occasion, Mr. Home was observed to shiver violently, as though seized by sudden cold, and on being questioned as to this symptom, he replied that a spirit was present who had *met his death by water*. This spirit proved, in fact, to be that of the brother of a lady present, who had been drowned while bathing.

"The communications we received were always strikingly characteristic of those by whom they were made, and in strict accordance with the opinions they had in life expressed, the rapidity and clearness of their replies to mental interrogation was also remarkable in the extreme. I have also seen communications made by means of the alphabet in several languages (Polish amongst the number), with which neither Mr. Home nor any one present, except the individual communicated with, was acquainted.

"Physical demonstrations, such as the elevation of large and heavy tables, the displacement of chairs and other pieces of furniture without the aid of any visible agency, have been so frequently described, that any details which I could mention would be superfluous. I will only say that I have frequently seen a large round table, supported by a claw, rise and remain suspended at the height of two feet from the ground for at least thirty seconds; all our chairs, Mr. Home's included, having been previously withdrawn from it to some distance, so that nothing might impede its movements. It frequently tilted over until its surface formed an inclined plane, at an angle of about 45° or more, the lamp and other objects remaining all the time upright and motionless. For this 'Katerfelto'<sup>1</sup> accounts by saying that a *velvet* cloth would neutralise their tendencies to slide. To this I will reply by stating that the table of which I speak was at no time covered by a velvet cloth, and that I have seen the same manœuvre performed by a table with an *uncovered marble top*. It has been remarked that it is a pity spirits cannot dispense with tables. I have heard the most distinct rappings on walls, floors, chimney-pieces,—nay, on pillows,<sup>2</sup>—and without the formation of any circle; while at breakfast, sitting round the fire, and at the dinner-table, on which I have seen the glasses, decanters, &c., violently agitated."

The concluding portion of Mrs. Baker's pamphlet was devoted to an examination of the various causes

<sup>1</sup> Under the *nom de plume* of "Katerfelto," a contributor to "All the Year Round" put forth, about this time, some very silly and futile theories respecting phenomena which he had never witnessed.

<sup>2</sup> In the case of Giannana.

that had been assigned to the phenomena; and, after passing them in review, the writer summed up by implying—rather than clearly avowing—her belief that the manifestations were wrought by the agency of departed spirits.

Her testimony that an accordion, while lying untouched on the floor, gave forth strains which were recognised as having been composed by the father-in-law of one of the circle, might be corroborated by many similar occurrences in the life of Home. *Might be*, I say; for although such occurrences were many, very few of them have been placed on record. The persons by whom they ought to have been attested have, in most instances, remained as mute as though their speech, and not their silence, had been a crime. I will cite a remarkable instance of such lost facts from the records of the year 1868.

In May of that year there was published in a Spiritualist periodical called *Human Nature* an account of a séance at Kilmory House, Norwood, then the residence of Mrs. Jencken, senior. The writer was her son, Mr. H. D. Jencken; and in addition to his mother and himself, there were present Mr. J. H. Simpson (now of Corfe Castle, Wareham), a person of some scientific attainments,<sup>1</sup> and one or two sitters whose names the narrator unfortunately does not give. The manifestations at this séance were numerous and remarkable; the most interesting of them all appears to me to be the following:—

“Mr. Home had laid hold of the accordion in one hand,” says Mr. Jencken, “and, after waiting a few minutes, some chords were played by an invisible hand, followed by an air which was repeated three or four times. I cannot say I quite followed the tune; it appeared to me broken, and changed from its original melody. ‘What does it mean?’ was asked. The name ‘John’ was spelt out, and the tune repeated. Again we asked, ‘To whom does this apply?’ No answer; and so the matter was passed over. A few days after—

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<sup>1</sup> For various of Mr. Simpson's experiences with Mr. Home, see other chapters of this volume, and also “D. D. Home: His Life and Mission,” pp. 46 and 286-288.

wards, I received a letter from a gentleman who had been present, explaining that the air that had been played was meant for him; that at the time, anxious not to disturb the mind of the medium, and to shut the door even upon thought-reading, he had kept his counsel; that the tune played was one he had himself altered to suit his voice; that only two persons alive knew the notes he had changed; the third who knew them was beyond the grave. He writes—‘It is an air my wife particularly liked, and always asked me, if alone with her, to play. The words are by Mrs. Hemans, and the two last lines are—

‘Yet would I buy with life again  
That one dear dream of thee.’

“My friend continues—‘These are simple facts; I give them as such.’”

Would that he had been sufficiently grateful for the convincing token of identity accorded to him to add his name!

“The accordion,” says Mr. Jencken, “as it played the air or melody, moved horizontally towards Mr. Simpson.” Such a movement of the instrument commonly indicated that the air played was intended for the person thus approached, and that the spirit-player was in some way connected with him. It is to be remarked also, that, in answer to the question, ‘What does this mean?’ the word *John* was spelt out, and that Mr. Simpson’s full name was *John Hawkins Simpson*. These imperfect indications of the identity of the person to whom this beautiful manifestation was directed are all that the narrative of the séance affords; and, unfortunately, they are very far from being conclusive.

Although all record of hundreds of messages and tokens of identity conveyed through “music, heavenly maid,” at the séances of Home has unhappily perished, the particulars of others have escaped oblivion, and will be found in various chapters of this and my former volume. I will briefly indicate one or two of the most striking instances.

At the séance in London described by Robert Bell and Dr. Gully (see my former work, pp. 141–146),



Robert Chambers asked the spirit of his father to play his favourite ballad. The *flute* notes of the accordion “almost immediately played through ‘Ye banks and braes o’ Bonnie Doon,’”—which air, Chambers assured the remaining sitters, had been his father’s favourite, *while the flute had been his father’s favourite instrument.*

Chambers then asked for another favourite air of his father’s, “which was not Scotch.” “The Last Rose of Summer” was similarly played, and similarly attested by Dr. Chambers to be the air he had in mind.

During a séance at Adare Manor in 1869, an accordion, which had been brought by Captain Wynne, was played upon very finely, and *with the tremolo effect*—a circumstance which, for reasons of his own, caused the Earl of Dunraven to form a conjecture as to the identity of the player. “Will you tell us who is playing?” he asked the spirits. In reply, the alphabet was called for, and the message “*Remember that*” was given to Lord Dunraven, while, at the same instant, the accordion began to play softly “Oft in the Stilly Night.” “This air,” he records, “was long ago one of my greatest favourites.” On his again desiring to know the name of the spirit, it was spelt out by touches on his knee; and Lord Dunraven then explained to the other sitters how he had been enabled to identify the player in the first instance from the circumstance of the tremolo effect. “When one recalls the words,” he says in his account of the séance—

“‘Oft in the stilly night, ere slumber’s chain hath bound me,  
Fond memory brings the light of other days around me,’

how touching the message becomes, and how beautiful the mode of representing it.”

In Captain Chawner’s narrative of the second séance at Newton Vallence, given in another chapter of this volume, he describes the playing of an accordion while held in his father’s hand.

“The volume of sound elicited from it,” he writes, “was such as

to fill us with wonder. We did not know what air it was, but a more exact imitation of the organ could not be produced. . . . The organ was my grandfather's favourite instrument, and the peculiar tremulous shake that finished the performance was to us both very striking; it reminded us so of his touch, which, from his great age, became very shaky. For my own part, it took me back to the last time I heard him play on the organ, in the very room in which we were then seated—a period some twenty years past."

At a séance in 1857 with the Count and Countess de Beaumont de la Somme, a spirit presented himself purporting to be the son of a lady present, who was that evening witnessing the manifestations for the first time.

"The accordion was being played, and she asked if he could remember a piece of music which had particularly struck them both whilst they were travelling together for his health in Germany. It had escaped her mind, she said, but it could be easily recalled to her if he would play it. Upon this, the accordion played some intricate passages from the opera of *Norma*, which she at once recognised." ("Incidents," vol. i. pp. 121, 122).

Why is it that the witnesses of such beautiful and convincing manifestations should in so many instances have abstained from placing them on record—abstained so ungratefully and with so much selfishness? It is evident that the happiness of humanity and its future beyond the tomb were as little heeded by the believers as by the sceptics. If men of science, who recognised no life but that of the body, did nothing for spiritual truth, that was not an excuse for the silence of those who were convinced of the truth, yet who sacrificed it to their petty personal interests, social and other.

As for the clergy, who could only see in the manifestations the deceits of Satan disguised as an angel of light, their aberration was melancholy and humiliating in the representatives of Christianity. The universal laws of Providence have not altered since Christ said, "The tree is known by its fruits." Probably the priesthood would wish to add something to His words; but true Spiritualists accept them literally as they were spoken by Christ.

Among Home's Florentine correspondence, some letters remain that were written to him by Mrs. Crossman, the mother of Mrs. Baker; but they give no further details of the manifestations at the Villa Colombaia, and contain little more than declarations of the writer's unchangeable friendship for Mr. Home. In one of these letters a curious passage occurs, which seems to show that his visit to Rome in 1856 was regarded with an evil eye by the Papal authorities, and that his expulsion was only prevented, and ecclesiastical hostility disarmed, by the success of the unremitting zeal with which the Branicki family had been labouring to persuade him to join the Roman Catholic Church.

"I had two lines yesterday from Spada," writes Mrs. Crossman from Florence to Home in Naples, "written in a great hurry, saying that he thought it was better to let us know that if you arrived in Rome, you would directly be sent away; and that he thought it would be better to let you know this at once, that you might not be placed in so uncomfortable a position. . . . All send kindest messages to you. Believe me to be your affectionate friend,

"ANNIE CROSSMAN."

The letters of Mrs. Macdonell refer to several séances at which she and Mr. Hugh Macdonell were present; but, like Mrs. Crossman, the writer affords no details of her experiences. A couple of extracts may suffice:—

"Last night, H.R.H. the Prince of Saxe-Meiningen expressed such a lively interest to assist at a séance, and so repeatedly asked me if I could not manage it for him before he left Florence tomorrow, that I immediately wrote to Mr. Schintz to propose that you should alter your plan, and come to dine and spend the evening with me. . . . We shall only be six—His Royal Highness, Schintz, Hugh, myself, the Baron de Milonye (?), and yourself—and you will not have reason for scolding me for making the circle too large."

A letter written by Mrs. Macdonell on the eve of Home's departure from Florence affords some indication of the impression made on the writer by the séances at which she had been present:—

"Thanks, my dear Dan, for your very kind note. I would indeed be sorry, *very sorry*, if I thought that I should not see you before you left Florence. . . . I gave Hugh the souvenir you sent him ; he will go up to see you himself, my dear friend. I hope he may have been as much touched *inwardly* as he was outwardly when he received the gift. You really must fix a day before you go, to come and dine and spend the evening with us. I should be glad if it were a day that Hugh could be present ; he wishes it so much. I am so afraid that you may have disposed of your time. . . . Ever one of your sincerest friends,

IDA H MACDONELL."

Mrs. Baker and the Crossmans seem to have been known to the Countess Orsini,<sup>1</sup> who mentions them in one of her numerous letters to Home,<sup>2</sup> a letter urging him to leave the whirl (*tourbillon*) of Paris, and prove his attachment to his Florentine friends by coming to pass the winter in the Palace Orsini. This invitation is dated 21st November, 1857 :—

"Our climate is fine and suits you," adds the Countess ; "write a word by return of post, that your room may be got ready, and then come to us. I wait your reply, and count the days ; so hasten. We will pass the winter tranquilly, and I shall be very happy if I renew my acquaintance with those beautiful marvels which lift the soul to heaven. Orsini charges me to give you his kindest regards, and is as desirous as myself to welcome you to us. ANTOINETTE ORSINI."

Home did not visit Florence that winter ; and I find the Countess writing to him at Rome, in the spring of 1858 :—"Come to Florence, in the full certitude of finding there friends who are very far from having forgotten you. What are you doing at present ? Are you in all the *éclat* of your power ? Will you not come to us very soon ? All the Orsini family want to shake hands with you and bid you heartily welcome ; so write to me at once the date of your arrival. In the meantime, my dear Home, a thousand good wishes for Easter, in which Orsini joins."

Home was on the point of leaving Rome for Naples

<sup>1</sup> See my former work, pp. 59, 60.

<sup>2</sup> "Les Crossman et Baker passent l'hiver à Pise."

with the Count and Countess Koucheleff when this letter reached him, and the preparations for his marriage prevented him from accepting the renewed invitation of the Count and Countess Orsini to visit them in their old palace by the Arno. Several years passed before he again saw Florence.

It will be within the recollection of readers of my former work that, at the commencement of the year 1858, Home visited Holland, where he held several séances with Queen Sophia, and that, during one of these séances at the Dutch Court, manifestations of a very interesting and remarkable character occurred. Before leaving Holland, Mr. Home, at the request of his travelling-companion, Mr. J. M. Tiedemann, gave three séances to the staff of a free-thinking publication of Amsterdam. Mr. A. J. Riko, of Korte Molenstraat, The Hague, has furnished to me the following narrative of the séances in question :—

“In visiting Holland,” writes Mr. Riko, “Mr. J. M. Tiedemann was desirous to convince the staff of the monthly journal called *The Dawn* (*De Dageraad*) of the reality of the phenomena of Spiritualism, through the agency of Mr. D. D. Home. This object was fully attained.

“One of the members of the staff in question published a pamphlet containing the following particulars :—

“The investigators who met Mr. Home at Amsterdam consisted of the most sceptical of the sceptical. There were ten persons present at the first séance, among whom were a doctor of philosophy, an M.D., a jurist, and an optician. The circle, in short, was formed of persons well calculated to observe acutely and reason shrewdly.

“The table at which we sat was a large mahogany one, without castors, and very solid and heavy. Mr. Home desired us to converse freely, and at the same time we were invited by him to keep a strict watch on his movements, which we did with argus eyes. On the table were wax-candles and some books. The cloth was thrown back over the table, so that we might look freely beneath, and lighted candles were also placed below the table. With regard to the manifestations that ensued, there could be no question of biology; each observer was perfectly convinced of being in his normal state of consciousness. We exchanged various remarks, and none of us put any restraint on the expression of his incredulity concerning the spiritual hypothesis.

“In this manner we held three séances, two during the evening,

and one in the middle of the day. During the first, the table moved in every direction, in spite of the repeated efforts of those present to hold it fast. Raps were heard on the table, and afterwards in every part of the room. Whatever number of raps we called for was immediately given in compliance with our request. This was repeated several times.

"The table inclined itself in such a manner that, under ordinary circumstances, the candlesticks and other objects on it would have fallen to the ground; but nothing stirred. During this manifestation the doctor of philosophy<sup>1</sup> stationed himself under the table, but discovered nothing to account for its movements; and his experience was similar when the table rendered itself light or heavy at demand. On the first request being made, it was light as a feather; on desiring it to be heavy, our combined efforts were unavailing to raise it from the floor.

"During the second séance a Masonic signal was given by raps at our request, and a question put *mentally* was responded to exactly. Five inquirers were present at this second séance.

"At a third séance we were seven in number. On this occasion the remarkable phenomenon of a violent shaking of the floor took place: we all of us experienced a sensation as though we had been seated in a carriage with springs, which was travelling over a paved road. This was followed by touches on our cheeks, our knees, and our arms. Hardly had any of us expressed the wish to be touched when it was gratified. One of our number watched this phenomenon carefully for more than twenty minutes, remaining perfectly calm the while, and making a minute observation of the facts.

"Another investigator threw his handkerchief on the floor, and at his request the handkerchief was placed in the hand of a person seated opposite to him. The writer" (of the pamphlet quoted from by Mr. Riko) "had a handkerchief taken from him with considerable force, while he was holding it firmly in his hand beneath the table.

"Many other experiments were made, and watched most narrowly, in the hope of discovering the cause of the phenomena—but in vain. We saw the phenomena, but we remained incapable of explaining them. There was nothing to give us the faintest impression of charlatanism on the part of Mr. Home."

The above testimony is extracted by Mr. Riko from the pamphlet published by one of the persons present at these Amsterdam séances of 1858. Mr. Riko further writes to me:—

"The author of the pamphlet in question was Mr. F. Güntz, a well-known publisher. The staff of the *Dageraad* was composed of

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<sup>1</sup> He was a Dr. Polak.—A. J. Riko.

avowed free-thinkers, who were actively engaged at the time in propagating their ideas by means of that journal. They were certainly not men to allow themselves to be duped. Dr. Polak, among others, was a man of considerable scientific attainments, and all the investigators belonged to the most intelligent class of society. Before the séances they had publicly boasted that they were about to discover the 'tricks' of Mr. Home; but the result was entirely contrary to their expectations. Although not converted at once to the spiritual theory, several of them ended by embracing that conviction after patient and prolonged inquiry into the subject.

"The séances given by Mr. Home at the Hague, and the phenomena witnessed by Queen Sophia, were described by Major Revins, and also by myself, in different publications.

"I can bear witness that the more than incredulous attitude assumed by the contributors to the *Dageraad* was calculated to give offence to Mr. Home. They nevertheless became the witnesses of interesting phenomena, under circumstances which carried conviction to their minds; and, after the departure of Mr. Home, these same sceptics loyally proclaimed *their entire faith in the reality of the phenomena*, although they did not undertake to explain them. Among those of their number who afterwards became Spiritualists was Dr. Polak, who frequently employed his vigorous pen in defence of the cause.

"Let me add that two well-known *savants* of the time, Doctors Ryken and Vermey, were convinced by Mr. Home at the Hague, and that they ranked during several years among the most noted defenders of Spiritualism in Holland.

"It cannot be too emphatically proclaimed that to Mr. Home is due the establishment of Spiritualism in our country.

"A. J. RIJCK."

"THE HAGUE, August, 1889."

## CHAPTER V.

*HOME IN ENGLISH SOCIETY.*

WHEN Robert Bell, in his *Cornhill* article, wrote of "the rabid curiosity and gaping credulity with which he (Home) is notoriously persecuted," and expressed his astonishment that Home should preserve his simplicity of life and character "under such a pressure of wonder and inquiry, especially from people of the highest rank," Bell did not overstate the case. Even in 1855, when all that was known in England concerning Home consisted of a few vague reports respecting his séances in the States, he had become the object of the eager curiosity of English society before he had been a fortnight in London, and more requests for séances were pressed on him than he could possibly gratify. The diary of Mr. Home for 1855 contains only a few entries made at intervals, which do not extend beyond the 4th of June, so that I am unable to give anything resembling a list of the English investigators of this period; but even the few names known to me are sufficient proof of the interest which Home's visit to London had excited. Among the persons present at his séances in 1855 were Lord Brougham, Sir E. B. Lytton, the Baroness Grey de Ruthyn, Lady Hastings, Lady Waldegrave, Lady Combermere, and probably Lord Lyndhurst. None of these ventured to give public testimony to the manifestations which he or she witnessed at séances with Home.

When the Marchioness of Hastings wrote to Mr. Home after her first séance that "she had been so surprised and startled by what she saw as to feel it



impossible to come to any conclusion until she had seen it several times," her letter not only conveyed a delicate hint that further séances would be acceptable, but epitomised in a few lines the history of many other inquirers of rank. They looked on the phenomena as matters to be wondered at rather than reasoned about, and, their curiosity satisfied, never thought of putting on record the facts that they had witnessed.

Had Lady Hastings related the occurrences that "so surprised and startled her," it would have been of little consequence that, in observing facts, she was unable to draw inferences from them. The phenomena of those séances would have been of very great value to inquirers better fitted to deduce conclusions from recorded facts. Allowing for some rare exceptions amongst the fashionable wonder-seekers who thronged to the séances of Home, all that can be said of their investigations of the phenomena is, that they began in curiosity and ended in wonder.

In the interval between Home's first and second visits to London, his séances at the courts of Russia and France had rendered him a European celebrity; and whatever the interest he had excited in 1855, it was eclipsed tenfold by the stir he created in English society on his arrival from the Continent in November, 1859. A thousand stories concerning his mysterious gift were set in circulation by people who knew nothing of him but his name; and the natural tendency of feeble and narrow minds to explain the inexplicable by a reference to the power of Satan was stimulated by these romances as they passed from lip to lip.

So recently as the month of September, 1888, a story, professedly founded on fact, was contributed to *Blackwood's Magazine* under the title of "Aut Diabolus, aut Nihil." It related the circumstances under which the Author of Evil was evoked at a Parisian séance for the confusion of a popular French preacher, who had publicly asserted and privately denied the existence of Lucifer. The *Blackwood* fabulist did not go the length

of expressly including Home in his imaginary circle of demon-worshippers; but, as Home's name had been dragged into the introductory pages of the story—its anonymous author alone knows why—an impression was actually created with some readers that the fiction in question was to be understood as dealing with one of the incidents of Home's life, and that this astonishing evocation had been performed under his auspices!—he of whom Bell wrote, so long ago as 1860: "He not only cannot call up spirits, as we hear on all sides, but he will tell you that he considers such invocations to be blasphemous." In spite of these reiterated disclaimers on Home's part, there were persons, especially in France, who continued to the last to look on him as a sorcerer, capable of evoking spirits at will; and, in spite of the fantastic absurdities of the *Blackwood* story, there are persons at this moment who insist that the introduction of a free-thinking Abbé to the Prince of Darkness did actually take place some years ago in Paris, and must needs have been performed through the instrumentality of Home. The only surprising thing is, that the vision which appeared to the demon-worshippers should not have been identified with Home himself. There are people who would believe in the identity, and who believed, while Home was still on earth, that he was either Eblis or in constant communication with him. A sample of the romances with which their credulity was fed will not be out of place.

In the years 1866-7 one of the acquaintances of Home was the tragedian Fechter. A story was circulated in London society, and presently found its way into the press, that while conversing with Fechter on one occasion, Home suddenly stretched out his hand and pressed the forefinger forcibly against his companion's breast. On its removal, a large spot of blood was seen on the actor's shirt front, just over the heart, although there was no trace of blood on Home's fingers nor on Fechter's chest. While the persons present were regarding the stain with amazement, it disappeared.

Home was pressed for an explanation of the mysterious phenomenon, but could only declare that he had been impressed to act as he did, and that he was further impressed with the imminence of some danger to the life of Fechter. At that moment, a table near the party made some eccentric movements, which were interpreted by Home as an imitation of a man riding, and as signifying that the peril with which Fechter was threatened would occur while he was on horseback. Shortly afterwards the celebrated actor went to Germany, and while he was travelling there, the war of 1866 broke out between Prussia and Austria. Fechter's journey brought him near the seat of war; and it so happened that one morning he took a fancy to go out riding. His horse was brought, and he was in the very act of mounting, when an unaccountable terror seized him, and he ordered the animal back to its stable, declaring that he would not ride that day. Thereupon, says the veracious legend, a friend present borrowed his horse, and having ridden forth in place of Fechter, and in disregard of military movements and warning omens, fell from the saddle an hour later—shot through the heart.

The only criticism to be passed on the story is that there does not appear to be a word of truth in it.

Bell took occasion to refer in his *Cornhill* article to "the paragraph romances we read in the newspapers about Mr. Home," and to "the false expectations created about him by absurd stories, which gather fresh absurdities as they pass from hand to hand." When it is considered that only a small part of English society can possibly have been present at his séances, numerous as they were, and that all English society talked of him, some idea may be formed of the amount of fiction that was current in London concerning Home. There are a class of people in all countries who, when they hear a celebrity talked of, hasten to steal a ray of reflected light from him by claiming to know him intimately, and whose mendacious

imagination will furnish them on the shortest notice with a host of particulars concerning this supposititious intimacy. The mysterious gift and extraordinary career of Home furnished an admirable theme to such romancers for the exercise of their peculiar faculty; and, accordingly, persons who had never so much as seen him were everywhere to be found recounting apocryphal anecdotes of himself or his séances. If one of his actual acquaintances dropped the least word concerning him, it was instantly caught up by eager ears, and transmitted from hearer to hearer with a score of additions and distortions.

It would be as easy to fill chapter after chapter with narratives of séances that were never held and incidents that never occurred, as I have found it difficult to obtain the facts of the actual séances of Home from the witnesses of those facts. Truth is proverbially modest and falsehood unblushing, but the one has never shown herself more timid nor the other more brazen than with reference to Home and Spiritualism.

Home arrived in England for the second time towards the end of November, 1859. Were it in my power to furnish a full list of the persons present at séances with him within a few months afterwards, it would read like the catalogue of a number of fashionable receptions extracted from the *Times* or the *Morning Post*. Sir E. B. Lytton and Dr. Ashburner hastened to renew the acquaintance of the year 1855; and, within a few weeks of his arrival in London, Home had séances with Mrs. Milner Gibson, Dr. Robert Chambers, and Lord Lyndhurst—the séances with the latter being held at the aged Chancellor's own residence. These investigators were followed by Lord Stafford, General Lodwick, Lord Dufferin, Mr. Edward Stirling, Sir Edwin Landseer, Lady Trelawney, M. Delpierre, Lady Compton, Mr. Grattan, M.P., Lady Downshire, the Duchess of Somerset, Lady Salisbury, Lord De Tabley, and many others.

In a pocket-diary of 1860 I find an entry showing

that Mr. Home had a séance at 14, Wilton Place, London, S.W., on Tuesday, February 28, 1860. The circumstances which led to this séance being held are explained by two letters, dated respectively the 24th and 27th of February, 1860. In the first, Mr. James Grant, editor of the *Morning Advertiser*, asks Mr. Home to give a séance to three ladies, who were friends of his and deeply interested in the subject of Spiritualism; in the second, Mr. Grant thanks Mr. Home for a séance promised for next day, and invites him to call at 14, Wilton Place at four o'clock, adding an assurance that the friends to whom he desires to introduce Mr. and Mrs. Home "are very delightful persons, and move in the highest circles of society."

The names of two of these fascinating *incognitæ* remain unknown to me, but the lady in whose house the séance of February 28, 1860, was held proved to be a Mrs. Edgeworth, several of whose letters to Home remain. Mrs. Edgeworth was acquainted with Sir Edwin Landseer; and Home notes in his diary that on March 24, 1860, Sir Edward was present at a séance at 14, Wilton Place. On May 11, 1860, the celebrated artist had a second séance with Home; and other séances followed, some of which were held at 1, St. John's Wood Road—then, I presume, the residence of Sir Edwin Landseer.

Sir Edwin gave Mr. Home a little souvenir which is now in my possession—the signed drawing of a dog, with "This is my little dog" written beneath it.

No record of Sir E. Landseer's experiences and impressions of Spiritualism is obtainable; but the letters of his friend Mrs. Edgeworth furnish distinct evidence that she had become a Spiritualist in consequence of her séances with Home. The most interesting of these letters is one written to him during his absence in America. I extract a few passages:—

"14, WILTON PLACE, BELGRAVIA, December 30th, 1864.

"MY DEAR DAN,—It really gave me very great pleasure indeed to hear of and from you, and truly glad I am to hear of the kind

reception that you have met with. All your friends will be delighted to see you back in England. I was beginning to feel extremely angry that you had written to Mrs. Hall and not to me. Lady Helena Newenham spent ten days here, and she often spoke of you, and the comfort she had derived from the séances which she and her husband had had with you. I wish much you were near us all now, and that your good influence was in the atmosphere. I *am* so disgusted by amateur would-be Spiritualists, who pretend to be mediums. When I say that I *see* the people kicking the tables and lifting them, they are so angry, and wish to put it down that I believe nothing. I say, 'Yes, *I do*. I believe in Home, and I do believe he has wonderful power.' But really when I see people take pencils—start—get into the position of one of our old-fashioned telegraphs, and say, 'Good-night. We greet thee with a loving farewell,' I do feel so cross. When I look at some believing creature, who firmly believes her child or her husband is blessing her, but five minutes after the medium is more frivolous than any one in the room, I do often wish you were present. . . .

"Poor C. Hamilton is dead; and as distinctly as you see this paper so distinctly I had my raps. *Three times this happened*, just two days before poor Christopher's death.

"I often think of Sacha.<sup>1</sup> Dear Sacha! how I should like to see her!—gentle, graceful, all that was endearing; and she was so proud of you. . . .—Your affectionate friend, G. M. EDGEWORTH."

Among the letters of 1879, I find one apprising Mr. Home that Mrs. Edgeworth had passed away a few weeks before, and reminding him that he was appointed co-trustee with a Mr. Hans Hamilton under the marriage settlement of her daughter.

A few weeks after his introduction to Mrs. Edgeworth, Home met for the first time Mr. Edward Kater, of 46, Sussex Gardens, Hyde Park, a gentleman who saw a great deal of the phenomena during the next two or three years. In my former work (p. 202), I have given the full text of a letter written by him to Mr. Home immediately after the publication of "Incidents in My Life."

"Having witnessed so much of what you and others have narrated," says Mr. Kater, "every page brought back to me those evenings which never can be forgotten. I very much like the quiet manner in which you have

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Home.

mentioned scenes and events which, almost word for word, I perfectly remember witnessing and hearing."

One of the séances to which Mr. Kater's testimony refers was that of the 9th of May, 1860. Home's diary informs me that the séance of that evening was held at Mr. Kater's house, and an unsigned narrative in the first volume of the "Incidents" furnishes a description of the manifestations which ensued. The circle was formed of nine persons, two of whom were Mr. and Mrs. Kater, while two others appear to have been the composer Blumenthal and his friend, Madame Loëser.<sup>1</sup> I extract from the "Incidents" (vol. i. pp. 144-147) an account of some of the phenomena witnessed:—

"Nothing occurred for a few minutes, during which conversation was kept up; and then the table gradually rose up off the floor about four feet, or rather more than a foot beyond our outstretched arms, the hands of which had rested gently on the table before its ascent. It then descended. Mr. Home took the accordion in his right hand by the rim at the bottom of the instrument, leaving his left hand on the table; and then were played some beautiful voluntaries, exquisitely attenuated, yet clear and melodious. They then came out gradually fuller and yet more full, till the room seemed filled with the volume of sound like a pealing organ, and still no false note. A friend sitting next to me, forgetting himself, exclaimed, 'My God, how wonderful!' and after a breath, asked, 'If they would give us some air we knew?' and having asked for 'God Save the Queen,' it was played at once.

"A lady present, whose little boy had recently died, had indications of her son being in the room; and the accordion suddenly commenced playing a well-known air, which on earth the little boy was very fond of, as tallying with his mamma's name."

The sitters then moved the table "to about eighteen inches from the window," and extinguished the lights.

"We found," continues the narrative, "that, though the room was dark, yet the light from the window was sufficient for us faintly to see each other."

Presently Mr. Home was lifted from the ground:—

<sup>1</sup> See p. 175 of "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," for a letter from Blumenthal to Home, showing the belief in Spiritualism which its writer entertained in 1860.

"I asked, 'Will you bring him, as much as possible, towards the window, so that we may see him?' and at once he was floated horizontally into the light of the window, so that we all saw his feet and a part of his legs resting or floating on the air, about six feet from the ground and three feet above the height of the table. He was then floated into the dark, and he exclaimed, 'They have turned me round, and I am coming towards you.' I saw his head and face, the same height as before, and as if floating on water instead of air. He then floated back, and came down. . . .

"I went and sat beside him; he took my hand, and in about a minute, and without any muscular action, he gently floated away from me, and was lost in the darkness. He kept talking to let us know where he was. We heard his voice in various parts of the farther end of the room, as if near the ceiling. . . . I next saw the shadow of his body on the mirror as he floated along near the ceiling. He said, 'I wish I had a pencil to make a mark on the ceiling. I have made a cross with my nail.' He came down near the door, and after a pause he was again taken up; but I did not see him, but heard his voice as if near the ceiling. Again he came down, and shortly returned to the table we were at; and the sounds on the table bade us 'Good night.'"

On the 6th of January, 1860, Home notes in his diary an introduction to a Mr. Irvine; and on the 2nd of February following, Mr. Irvine writes to him:—

"TRAVELLERS' CLUB.

"MY DEAR SIR,—The more I think—and I have thought much—of the *wonderful*<sup>1</sup> phenomena which I witnessed on Thursday evening, the more I am lost in astonishment, and the more my interest in your gifts is excited.

"Perhaps you do not remember (for you were wrapped in a sort of ecstasy at the time) that you described to a certain extent the apparition of what I cannot but think was my poor lost sister. Just previously, the spirit had written, 'Mary gave it to you,' in allusion to the circumstance of the bell, at your solicitation, being conveyed to my hand from that of Mrs. Home. . . .

"Now, what I am most anxious to beg of you is to give me a description of the spirit as visible to you. The little you did say was accurate as to age—which you described as about twenty-one—that her look was earnest, and as if she had undergone pain and some sorrow *lately*. I am, of course, desirous, as I know you are, not to give you any further information as to my sister's face or form till I shall have heard from you, if you will kindly take the trouble to send me a line at your leisure.

"Furthermore, when you shall return to town" (Mr. Home was

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<sup>1</sup> Underlined in the letter.



then at Liverpool), "I am very anxious for your permission to introduce to you a lady of *very* high rank, who is deeply interested in spiritual matters. I cannot say, dear Mr. Home, how very sincerely I am yours,

G. D. IRVINE."

At various of Home's séances in the years 1860 and 1861, there was present a Mr. Chinnery, who subsequently wrote to the *Times* concerning his experiences. I am not aware whether his letter was inserted or not; but a copy of it, in Mr. Chinnery's own handwriting, has been preserved among Mr. Home's papers, and is as follows:—

"67, LOWER THAMES STREET, March 15, 1862.

"To the Editor of the '*Times*.'

"SIR,—In the absence of Mr. Home, who is in France, I beg leave to direct your attention to a statement in the *Times* of this day, which is to the effect that it is strictly forbidden to persons who are present at a séance to look under the table.

"I cannot pretend to say what may be the practice in this respect of the gentleman whose name you associate with Mr. Home's, but I assure you that Mr. Home does not only *not forbid* such inspection, but invariably *invites* it on the part of those who appear to be unconvinced. I have seen two or three persons under the table during the manifestations on more than one occasion. Nothing, indeed, can be further from mystery or concealment than the whole proceedings; there is always a proper light in the room; and I may add that Mr. Home makes no sordid use of his powers, as he takes no payment from those who have the privilege of visiting him on any occasion of the kind in question.

VERITAS.

"Name, not for publication, S. F. Chinnery."

During the spring of 1860, and probably in the month of May, took place the séance described by Robert Bell in the *Cornhill Magazine* of August that year. In "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission" (pp. 141-145), I gave extracts from the *Cornhill* narrative, and briefly referred to the letter in which another of the investigators present at the séance published his confirmation of Mr. Bell's testimony. This second witness was Dr. Gully, of Malvern, whose letter on the subject appeared in the *Morning Star* during the month of October, 1860.

"In Mr. Coleman's letter of the 11th inst.," wrote Dr. Gully,

"he gives his opinion that the gentlemen who were present at the meetings recorded in the *Cornhill Magazine*, under the head of 'Stranger than Fiction,' should confirm or confute the statements made in that article. I was one of the persons present at the evening meeting. The other gentlemen were a solicitor in extensive practice, and two well-known writers of solid and instructive works" (*i.e.*, Robert Bell and Robert Chambers), "not writers of fiction, who, by the bye, appear to be so used to inventing, that they cannot believe that any one can possibly be employed in stating facts. It will be seen that the joke about 'fools of fashion' does not apply to the gentlemen alluded to, but that we were all workers in callings in which matters of fact, and not of fancy, especially come under observation. Further, it may be useful to some persons to know that we were neither asleep nor intoxicated, nor even excited. We were complete masters of our senses; and I submit that their evidence is worth a thousand conjectures and explanations made by those who were not present. Scores of times I have been much more agitated and excited in investigating a patient's case than I was in observing what occurred at the evening meeting in question.

"With this state of senses at the time, and revolving the occurrences in my mind again and again since that time, I can state with the greatest positiveness that the record made in the article 'Stranger than Fiction' is in every particular correct; that the phenomena therein related actually took place in the evening meeting, and, moreover, that no trick, machinery, sleight-of-hand, or other artistic contrivance produced what we heard and beheld. I am quite as convinced of this last as I am of the facts themselves.

"Only consider that here is a man, between ten and eleven stone in weight, floating about the room for many minutes—in the tomb-like silence which prevailed, broken only by his voice coming from different quarters of the room, according to his then position—is it probable, is it *possible* that any machinery could be devised (not to speak of its being set up and previously made ready in a room which was fixed upon as the place of meeting only five minutes before we entered it), capable of carrying such a weight about without the slightest sound of any description? Or suppose, as has been suggested, that he bestrode an inflated balloon, could a balloon have been introduced inflated, large enough to hold in mid-air such a weight? Or could it have been inflated with hydrogen gas without being detected by ears, eyes, or nose?

"It seems to me a much stronger sign of credulity to believe either of these suggestions,<sup>1</sup> with our present knowledge, than to adopt the wildest statements or dreams of what is called Spiritualism. Let it be remembered, moreover, that the room was, for a good part of the evening, in a blaze of light, in which no balloon or other machine sufficient for the supposed purpose could be intro-

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<sup>1</sup> The reader will probably be of Dr. Gully's opinion.

duced, or, if already introduced, could remain unobserved; and that, even when the room was comparatively darkened, light streamed through the window from a distant gas-lamp outside, between which gas-lamp and our eyes Mr. Home's form passed, so that we distinctly perceived its trunk and limbs; and most assuredly there was no balloon near him, nor any machinery attached to him. His foot once touched my head when he was floating above."

Dr. Gully then proceeded to attest the fact of an accordion having played *while held in his own hand, untouched by Mr. Home*, and to relate a remarkable proof of spirit-identity afforded in the course of the evening to Robert Chambers. These portions of his evidence will be found in my former work (pp. 144 and 146).

"I have thus borne testimony," continued Dr. Gully, "to the truthfulness of the facts related by the writer in the *Cornhill Magazine*, whom I recognise as having been my neighbour during the meeting" (Robert Bell); "and I have endeavoured to show that, as regards the principal and most wonderful phenomena, there could have been no contrivance by trick or machinery adequate to produce or account for their existence. How, then, were they produced? I know not; and I believe that we are very, very far from having accumulated facts enough upon which to frame any laws or build any theory regarding the agent at work in their production. Intelligent phenomena, such as the music played at request, point to intelligent agents; and spiritual bodies that have quitted fleshly bodies may prove to be at work. I, for one, wish that it were proved to be so. . . . But whilst I obstinately stand up for the integrity of my senses during my observation of the wonders above related, my inner senses cannot but observe many gaps that must be filled up before the bridge between the spiritual body's life here in the flesh and its life elsewhere out of the flesh can be finished. Meantime the facts must be patiently and honestly accumulated, and enthusiasm must be banished from the minds of the inquirers. And as regards the denials, and abuses, and jests of the non-inquirers, let it be remembered that scurrility and laughter never discovered or disproved anything in the world's history. . . .

"Inquirers, unlike routine people, must be prepared to rough it among their fellow-creatures; and I suppose that I, for having asserted that I have five senses as yet unimpaired, and for having testified to what the majority disbelieve, shall come in for my share of pity or abuse. Let it be so, if it helps on a truthful search.<sup>1</sup>

"J. M. GULLY, M.D."

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<sup>1</sup> If, in the history of the world, intelligence and the courage of one's

The concluding passages of Dr. Gully's letter show that he was very far from being a Spiritualist when he gave this testimony. His introduction to Home was then only a few months old, and his investigation of the phenomena of Spiritualism had barely commenced. During the eight or ten years following, Home was his frequent visitor at The Priory, Malvern; and prolonged and patient inquiry resulted in the fullest conviction on the part of Dr. Gully that the phenomena were of spiritual origin. In a narrative of some strange personal experiences contributed by him to the *Spiritual Magazine* for March, 1867, and reproduced by Home in the second volume of "Incidents in My Life," the Doctor declared:—

"It is impossible, without the denial of all sense, external and internal, to refuse belief in the intelligent extra-corporeal agency at work on that occasion. Of the existence of such agency I had long ceased to have any real doubt; but I may have speculated and spun theories to account for spiritual manifestations in some other way, and it may have been to put a stop to these that this marvellous night" (November 30, 1866) "was contrived for strongly impressing me with the reality of the interference."

In 1868, Dr. Gully made an affidavit in the suit of "Lyon v. Home," from which I extract the following passage:—

"I have, during the past seven years, witnessed, both in my own house and elsewhere, in the presence of the said Mr. Home, many curious occurrences, which I am unable to explain, in the way of singular phenomena, such as displacement of objects without physical contact, &c.; and from my personal and careful investigations (which Mr. Home himself ever urges), I am positive that it is not in consequence of any trick or device that such phenomena occur. I have even been witness to singular phenomena when the said Mr. Home was not in the same room, and also when he has been asleep. I have never known Mr. Home receive money for what is termed 'a

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opinions had been more frequently united, as they were united in Dr. Gully's case, earnest inquirers would have been assisted, and the world at large would not have to complain of being the victim of the prejudiced, the fanatical, and the ignorant.

séance,' but I have known him repeatedly refuse offers of as much as twenty guineas for a single séance."

Dr. Gully's account of the singular phenomena which occurred at The Priory, Great Malvern, on the night of November 30, 1866, is too lengthy for me to reproduce it *in extenso*; but the leading points of the narrative may be of interest. He commences by the following reference to the spirit-communications made through Home in trance:—

"All who have seen Mr. Home in this state of trance are aware how clearly he sees and communicates with spirits that have passed from the body. And marvellous and marvellously beautiful have been the communications made by them, through him, which it has been my fortune to hear. The gestures, the most trivial actions of bodily life, the mode of walking and speaking, the voice, the infirmities of persons who have passed away long before he was born, and concerning whose peculiarities in all these particulars Mr. Home had not the least possible means of obtaining any knowledge, are all repeated by him, when in this state, with an accuracy of detail which leaves no doubt, either that he is at the moment possessed by the spirit whose earthly characteristics he is delineating, or that he is receiving from them, or from other spirits, impressive communications which enable him to reproduce them."

Through Home in the trance, the spirits, on November 28, 1866, directed Dr. Gully to place glass cups under the posts of his bedstead. These were procured the next day, in the form of four "very thick glass salt-cellar, with a cup-like depression in the centre, just sufficient," says Dr. Gully, "to receive the end of each post of the bedstead. The circle round this depression was certainly one inch and a quarter thick."

The four glass cups were placed one under each post of the bedstead on the 30th of November. The Doctor went to his room rather late that night, having sat up writing till twelve o'clock:—

"As I passed along the corridor of the bedrooms," he relates, "I had the most distinct intimations of the presence of spiritual beings, and at one moment felt as if I were jostled by a distinct bodily agent. Something of the kind is frequently experienced, while Home is staying with me, by more than one member of my house-

hold. I went to bed; but I had just laid my head on the pillow when numerous and loud raps began to be heard in different parts of the room, but especially on the right side of the head of the bed, where hung the portraits of several of those whom I loved and have lost. I have often had trifling manifestations of the kind in my room when Home was asleep in the adjoining room; but these came with a rapidity, strength, and multiplication far greater than I had ever experienced. Still, they did not discompose me. I knew the raps (all but one) perfectly well; they were those of my father, brother, and child, and they gave me a feeling of happiness rather than of agitation. Under this influence I was sinking off into sleep, when all at once I was horribly roused by the noise of two tremendous blows, administered in rapid succession on the left-hand post of the head of the bedstead. They were not raps; they were such blows, and produced such noise, as if an iron poker had been wielded by brawny arms, and made to descend with all their force. They shook the bedstead violently; and as, in all my experiences of spiritual phenomena, I had never heard anything which had the smallest approach to this exhibition of power, they shook my nerves also, rousing me, moreover, as they suddenly did, from drowsy quietude. I started up in bed, and shouted to Home, in the next room, to come and be witness of what was going on."

Five minutes after Home had joined the Doctor, two more blows were given, "exactly similar to the former in force and noise," but dealt this time on the *right-hand* post at the head of the bed. A fifth blow was presently struck, the left-hand post again receiving it; and—

"We heard," says Dr. Gully, "the spirits moving articles about the room, and rustling the curtains of the canopy and the silk of the *duvet* which covered the bed. In the thick darkness, also, we *both* plainly saw, as it were, a wall of luminous matter all along the right side of the bedstead. I asked, 'Are those spirits standing around the bed?' Answer from all, 'Yes.' 'Are you looking upon us?' 'Yes, as you are looking upon us.' They all gave me their names; but, as I have said, there was one whose raps I did not recognise. I asked this one specially to give me his name. The answer given was 'M. L——'; and at the same time a large framed medallion cast of a woman's profile, which for many a year has hung near the head of my bed, was rapped quickly upon the wall. Astonished, I said, 'What! is that Margaret L——?' Answer, 'Yes; I love you always.' 'All these thirty-nine years?' 'Yes; and I must come *now*.' 'Because I am in danger?' 'Yes.' . . . It is thirty-nine years since she passed away; and in my experiences of Spiritualism, I have often wondered why she did not manifest herself."

I pass over Dr. Gully's minute and somewhat prolix record of phenomena which succeeded the message from Margaret L——, and arrive at his description of the closing manifestations of this singular night. It should be explained that the spirits declared the five violent blows on the bedstead to have been struck by a spirit of a peculiar but protective order, and to have been designed to rouse the Doctor and warn him of danger threatening him. On finally comprehending this, Dr. Gully rose, and lit a candle to examine the room.

"Still, where was the danger?" he writes. "We tried the canopy of the bed, but it was firm enough in its place. At length, in looking around, Home spied the glass cups underneath the bedposts, and asked what they were there for—having no remembrance of what he had said in his trance two days before. Explaining to him that he had himself suggested them, he asked the spirits present, 'Are these glass cups wrong?' Loud affirmative raps from four or five quarters. 'Shall we remove them?' The same raps as before. We proceeded to remove them, lifting the bedstead with some exertion; but it was readily done for the two lower posts and the *right* upper one. The two glasses of the lower posts were complete; but the glass under the *right* post, which had received two out of the five strong blows, was found broken into three pieces. We passed to the *left* upper post, which had received three blows; but, in consequence of a heavy chest of drawers, whose proximity left only a space of five or six inches between it and the bedstead, it was impossible to do more than touch the glass under that post, and quite impossible to lift the bedstead therefrom. As we approached this side of the bed, I holding a lighted candle, we both simultaneously exclaimed, 'There is a large luminous mass in the corner—that must be the guardian spirit.' *I saw it as plainly and undoubtedly as I see the hand that is writing these words.* That some powerful agent was there became evident from what followed. Home said, 'We can't get near enough to this glass to lift the bed and remove it;' when immediately, *without our touching the bed at all*, the whole mass was raised without any touch of his or mine, and Home withdrew the glass, which had received three blows, and which we found to be in four pieces, one of which was almost in a state of powder, so thoroughly had it been broken. This done, we heard and saw no more of the guardian; and when, on lying on the bed again to wait for what might happen, we asked about him, the spirits told us that he had gone away. And certainly we might have guessed that some potent agency had left the room; for the atmosphere, from being exciting and stifling (like the air just before a thunder-storm), calmed

down, and our physical sensations were totally changed from tension to placidity.

"After a little more talk about these strange occurrences," Dr. Gully continues, "Home went to his own room again, having been in mine upwards of an hour and a half. When he had gone, I picked up the silk *duvet*" (which had been thrown on the floor by an invisible hand), "and spread it over the bed, into which I got, with the hope of a sound sleep after such a tumult. It was not yet to be. During an hour and a quarter I was dozing off repeatedly, but each time I was roused by loud raps on the floor of the room. At length, between three and four A.M., worried and feverish with this frequent awakening, I impatiently threw the *duvet* off the bed. The act was followed by a shower of approving raps. Then, for the first time, I perceived what these awakenings meant; and I said, 'Was I to throw the *duvet* off the bed?' Answer, 'Yes;' and with the alphabet, 'Good night.' In a quarter of an hour I was asleep.

"In subsequent communication with spirits of my own family, I was informed that, had I on that night gone to sleep with the electricity of my body isolated by the glass cups underneath the bedstead and the silk *duvet* above me, I should have had a seizure in the head, and most probably have passed away in it, and that the emergency was very pressing . . .

"The question arises, How came spirits to recommend these glass cups, when subsequently it became necessary to rescue me from them? I never got any decided answer to this; but one night, some time afterwards, my friend Home, in a trance, exclaimed: 'You remember the glass cups and that night? They say that the whole was contrived for your good, and to impress upon you.' And most assuredly it did impress upon me; it is impossible to experience anything more real, palpable, visible, audible, than the facts of that night; it is impossible, without the denial of all sense, external and internal, to refuse belief in the intelligent, extra-corporeal agency at work on that occasion."

Various details of the strange phenomena described by Dr. Gully appear to indicate that, like many others observed in the presence of Home, some force akin to electricity was employed by the spirits in their production. The electric sound of the raps heard at seances<sup>1</sup> was sometimes so marked, that if the manifestations had taken place anywhere but *in the houses of the investigators themselves*, they might have suspected the room of containing machinery resembling that of the Egyptian Hall. It is well known that rapping sounds

<sup>1</sup> "I have heard a cascade of sharp sounds, as from an induction coil in full work, detonations in the air, &c."—*Mr. W. Crookes, F.R.S.*



can be produced by concealed electrical appliances, and that both sham mediums and avowed jugglers have made large use of these ; but it would be beyond the craft of either the impostor or the conjuror to produce such mock phenomena in a room which he had just entered for the first time in his life, which was brightly lit, and tenanted by eight or ten sceptical investigators, who kept constant watch over both his hands and feet. These were the circumstances under which rapping sounds have been thousands of times investigated in the presence of Home.

Mr. P. P. Alexander, M.A., and Dr. Findlater, editor of *Chambers' Cyclopædia*, whose experiences with Mr. Home at Edinburgh are given in my former work, were the very reverse of Spiritualists, but they had a merit which sceptics of the Brewster type did not possess—that of candid, unflinching honesty in the narration of the facts observed by them, and of the circumstances under which those facts were investigated. Said Mr. Alexander (“Spiritualism: a Narrative with a Discussion,” 1871):—

“I may premise that I cannot readily conceive conditions much more favourable to Dr. Findlater and myself, as regards the interests of truth, than those under which this little experiment was made—more unfavourable to Mr. Home, presumed a mere juggler and impostor. Had Mr. Home advertised an entertainment to take place in a hired apartment of his own, I don't think I should have cared to go to see him. But the room was Mrs. Doun's drawing-room, and could scarce in any way have been *prepared* by Mr. Home without her or Dr. Doun's connivance—a theory of the matter utterly inadmissible, in virtue of the known and high character of both. . . . The drawing-room was fully and brightly lit with gas.”

When raps were heard, Mr. Alexander beneath the table, and Dr. Findlater above, kept watch respectively over the feet and hands of Mr. Home, at the latter's request:—

“I may remark,” writes Mr. Alexander, “that the light under the table, though necessarily dimmer than above, was yet amply sufficient for purposes of clear observation. For a good while nothing took place but raps, which flew about all over the table; and I

could indicate, when desired by Mr. Home to do so, the precise *locale* upon the table of each rap as it occurred. Meantime, by anything beneath the table, the raps were entirely unaccounted for; and Mr. Home, in particular, had his feet steadily at rest beneath his chair. His hands, as observed by Dr. Findlater, were quietly before him on the table."

In the year 1868, Mr. J. Hawkins Simpson, an electrical engineer, and the inventor of various electrical apparatus, had numerous séances with Mr. Home. He declared in a letter to *Human Nature*, also given among the affidavits of the Lyon lawsuit, "That the physical effects are in Mr. Home's case produced without aid from electricity, ferro-magnetism, or apparatus of any kind, I am well satisfied. They are *bona fide*—of that no one who witnesses them can have a doubt, unless he be a sciolist capable of misleading people in a reprehensive way."

Home was himself the electric battery and accumulator with which the spirits operated. In the dry atmosphere of Russia and the north of the United States, phenomena of a distinctly electrical character were repeatedly observed in connection with his exceptional organisation. Sparks would shoot from his fingers on their being brought in contact with particular substances, as in the case of the letter handed to him in the dark at St. Petersburg by Baron Meyendorff's servant.<sup>1</sup> I have frequently heard him relate an experiment made in connection with this quality at New York, when he lit gas-jet after gas-jet by the mere contact of his fingers. In the *Spiritual Magazine* for September, 1863, I find the following reference to this incident:—

"In most mediums there has been observed an excess of electricity—so much so, that some of them can light gas from the ends of their fingers. This is the case with Mr. Home, who at New York one evening lighted the gas thirty-six times in succession by merely approaching it with the tips of his fingers."

<sup>1</sup> See my former work, p. 243.

It seems probable that the famous *Cornhill* séance described by Mr. Bell and Dr. Gully took place at 3, Hyde Park Place, the residence of Mrs. Milner Gibson. More of Home's séances were held there during 1860 and the two or three years following than at any other house in London. Mrs. Gibson kept a journal of the manifestations observed, and various unsigned extracts from it appeared in the first volume of the "Incidents," especially in connection with the month of May, 1860. With the help of Mr. Home's diary for that month and Mrs. Gibson's letters to him, I have been enabled to identify two of these contributions. The first extract from Mrs. Gibson's journal is dated May 1, 1860, and describes a séance held the evening before—Monday, April 30th. Monday was Home's customary day for holding séances at Hyde Park Place; but these weekly circles were frequently supplemented by others.

At the séance of April 30, 1860, there were present Mrs. Milner Gibson, her *dame de compagnie*, Mdlle. Galeer, Mr. and Mrs. Home, and five other ladies and gentlemen, one of whom seems to have been the Mr. W. Ashurst whose letter to Home is given in my former work (p. 248). Mrs. Gibson relates, that although the moon and the gaslight from the street alone lighted the séance, they did so completely, as the moon was very bright; that, after a short time, there rose slowly in the space made by the window a most lovely hand of a woman—transparent and luminous; that the hand was visible "more from the internal light which seemed as it were to stream out of it than from external light;" that, when it vanished, "Mdlle. ——" (Mdlle. Galeer), "who sat next to the open space, saw another hand forming itself close to her;" and that, finally, a hand and arm rose, "luminous and beautiful, covered with a white transparent drapery," and remained visible to all the circle for at least five minutes."

"Then spirit-hands held up to us an exquisite wreath of white flowers. I never saw any wreath made by human hands so perfect

in form and design," writes Mrs. Gibson. "The 'emblem of truth' was then shown. This was more beautiful than all the rest—a fairy-like fountain of apparently clear, sparkling water, which threw up showers of silvery rays, vanishing from our sight like mist, and dwelling on the memory as perfection. After this it was rapped out, 'We can do no more.'

"Mr. Home was put into a trance; and as he sank back in his chair, a gleam of the most vivid light fell upon me. This light fell over my shoulders and gleamed on my right hand, and came from a direction whence no earthly light could have come. It came from a part of the room where the spirit of one who was a friend of mine when on earth has often stood before. This light was seen by no one but myself; but as I turned round, in the hope of seeing the spirit, Mr. Home said to me, 'Yes, he is there,' and added a communication from him. . . . He also gave us the full name of the spirit who had gone to America with Mr. A——'s father, and added some private information, which Mr. A—— confirmed as true."

The letters of Mrs. Milner Gibson to Mr. Home contain many references to persons well known in the London society of thirty years ago, whose introduction to the phenomena of Spiritualism took place at her house. Mr. Buckle was one of these, Mr. Edward Stirling another; and a third was Lady Shelley, two of whose letters to Mr. Home are given in my former volume, and who, in her turn, was the means of directing Dr. Gully's attention to the phenomena.

"I should *much* wish the Marchioness of Londonderry to come as soon as possible," writes Mrs. Milner Gibson, in an undated letter of the year 1861. "You will like her, I know, and she is very anxious to make your acquaintance."

Lady Londonderry came accordingly to a séance at Hyde Park Place; and this first séance with Home was followed by numerous others, most of them being held at her own residence. Two of the notes of the Marchioness to Mr. Home seem to contain indications of having been written by a Spiritualist. They are undated, but probably belong respectively to the years 1861 and 1862. In the first Lady Londonderry writes:—

"37, GROSVENOR SQUARE, *Friday*.

"DEAR MR. HOME,—I hope you will come to see

me again soon. Lady Milford, who is a firm believer, wants very much to meet you here. Could we not have a little séance some day next week—Tuesday or Wednesday? What hour do you prefer? Truly yours,  
 “E. LONDONDERRY.”

The second is more decisive of the writer's convictions :—

“1st January.

“DEAR MR. HOME,—We will lunch at half-past one, if you will come then, instead of two, as my clerical friend can't stay very long, and I am very anxious he should see something and have some talk with you. It seems such a pity that the teachers of the people should be so narrow-minded as not to *investigate*, at all events ; but I think this one would.—Yours truly,  
 “E. L.”

“I have had many new requests about our séances,” Mrs. Milner Gibson tells Home (June 1, 1860), “amongst the rest, Lord de Tabley, whom I much wish to have at our first séance on your return.” (Home was then passing a week in Scotland.) “He first spoke to my husband, who answered abruptly that he knew nothing about it ; so Lord de T. called on me with Dr. Ashburner, and I had a long conversation with him.”

A letter of Count Tolstoy, printed in my former work (p. 163), shows that Lord de Tabley was present at the séance of June 18, 1860, and gives an account of the phenomena observed.

“I shall let Monckton Milnes know,” writes Mrs. Gibson in another letter of June, 1860, “that Mr. Townshend is not coming, as he will prefer putting off his sitting till they can come together. Who will you choose to fill these two places? as we have so many anxious to come. Do you bring your Russian friend on Friday? Can Lady Trelawny come? Edward Stirling? Lady Shelley, with the Hon. Mrs. Rashleigh? Miss Heaton begged me earnestly and urgently to allow her to have the chance of any vacancy. She is a friend of the Brownings, a thorough believer, and has sat with us formerly.”

“So many are coming to us!” says Mrs. Gibson in a letter of June 5, 1860. “I told you of Lord de Tabley. I lent him one of my journals” (of séances), “and he is anxiously waiting to be sum-

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moned to a séance. Fancy my joy on Saturday night at Lady Palmerston's, when Higgins—Jacob Omnium—and Hayward *both* asked to be permitted to come to a séance. It was a great joy to me that men of such intellect should search into this truth, and I told them so. They must be among the first. . . . I had a conversation with Lord Dufferin, and promised to let him know as soon as you return.

"Our list of the best people stands thus:—Mr. Higgins, Lord Dufferin, Mr. Hayward, Sir Emerson Tennant, Lady Trelawny, Mlle. Tietjens, Mrs. Grote, Sir Fitzroy Kelly, Mr. Oliphant, Mr. A. Mackinnon, Mr. Chauncey Hare Townshend, Mr. Stirling, Lord de Tabley, Mrs. Temple Bawdoin, the Hon. Mrs. Rashleigh, Mr. and Mrs. Mountford, Mr. Pickford, and Garcia—the brother of Mme. Malibran. Mr. Sargood, a barrister, sat with you at Miss Cushman's some years ago;<sup>1</sup> by all that he says, you must have been drawn to him—he certainly is so to you, and is very greatly impressed."

The Spiritualism of Lady Shelley is on record in her own words in my former volume. Home paid several visits to the Shelleys at Boscombe, but the narrative of the séances held there has never been published. One of those visits took place towards the close of December, 1865, when Home, as appears from his diary, went to Boscombe with Dr. Gully, and stayed over the New Year. In the month of October following occurred his adoption by Mrs. Lyon, on hearing of which Lady Shelley writes to him:—

"BOSCOMBE, October 19th.

"DEAR MR. HOME,—Nelly's" (Miss Gully's) "letter, with an announcement of your good fortune, has indeed delighted me more than I can tell you; and I cannot resist sending you a word of congratulation, and wish I could shake you by the hand and tell you how much I rejoice in all this. . . . My husband begs me to give you his warmest congratulations and good wishes, and Flossie is as pleased as I am myself. God bless you.—Very sincerely yours,

"J. SHELLEY."

Lady Poulett saw even more of the manifestations than Lady Shelley; but such of her letters to Mr. Home as have been preserved contain no particulars of the experiences, and little regarding the convictions of the writer. Mrs. S. C. Hall, Mrs. De Burgh, Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Charlotte Cushman, the American actress, was in London in May, 1855, and Mr. Home had two or three séances at her house.

Heaphy and others, write of her, however, as having declared her faith in Spiritualism.

Mrs. De Burgh,<sup>1</sup> in one of her letters, gives an amusing account of a spurious spirit-message communicated to Lady Poulett by a pretended medium :—

“Since my last letter to you,” she writes to Mr. Home on September 9, 1861, “I went to London to Lady Poulett’s. In the evening we had a certain Madame B——, a professional medium. She went into a trance, but I felt highly suspicious of its genuineness, especially when the only spirit she saw—who sent most tender messages to his widow—was Lord Poulett, who is quite well at Hinton! ‘My dear wife’ and I talked a great deal of you and Sacha. She seems only to look forward to seeing you again.”<sup>2</sup>

Like her sister, Mrs. Cowper, one of whose many séances with Home is described by Mr. William Howitt in another chapter of this work, Mrs. De Burgh was an unavowed Spiritualist.

“Our blessed belief in the intercourse of spirits with those still clothed in flesh takes the sting from death,” she writes to Home in May, 1862, a few weeks before Mrs. Home passed from earth; “and at this time of trial, the thought that you will not be parted from her must be the strong consolation. The remembrance of Sacha as I saw her that evening when the Heaphys were with you—so bright and cheerful—will always remain with me; and perhaps her loving spirit will sometimes visit me. . . .

“I do not develop into mediumship, though I much long to do so.”

The letters of Lord Dufferin and the Marchioness of Downshire to Mr. Home contain little more than invitations to dinner or requests for séances; and the same may be said of Mrs. Hope (sister to Lady Home), Lady Egerton of Tatton, Sir William Bovill, and his brother Mr. George Bovill, Sir H. A. Johnstone, the Hon. Mrs. Phipps, &c.

<sup>1</sup> See my former work, p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> “I expect to leave London next Thursday: I hope we may often meet on my return in the spring. My friend, the Prince de Solms, is charmed to have made your acquaintance. He is such a nice person, and, as you must have discovered, an enthusiastic inquirer into the truth of Spiritualism.”—*Lady Poulett*, writing to Mr. Home at Ryde, August 23, 1862.

"After you left the other night," Mrs. Phipps tells Mr. Home in one of her letters, "the spirits were very busy all over the room and tables, and a message was sent to me—a most interesting one. Did Colonel Calthorpe tell you the fright he was in at night?"

It would seem to have been the Hon. Mrs. Phipps who introduced the Duchess of Somerset to Home and Spiritualism. She writes in another letter:—

"The Duchess of Somerset is so anxious to see you and Sacha" (Mrs. Home). "She has just written to me to ask if you would see her. May I tell her to come with me to-morrow evening, and introduce her to you both?"

A reference to the Duke of Somerset occurs in a letter written by Mr. Home to the Halls in 1861, and dealing principally with the mischiefs which impostors were already beginning to work in the name of Spiritualism:—

"I saw yesterday the Duke of Somerset, and he was laughing and relating one of Mr. ——'s séances at the house of a Mr. Tomlin, where they *all* saw Mr. —— take the papers off the table; and some of them went the very same evening to the club, and did it quite as well as he did. I need not repeat to you the harm a thing like this does. It will all be for good, I have no doubt; but it is trying at the time."

Another inquirer was the Marchioness of Ely, the sister of Miss S. Hope-Vere.<sup>1</sup> Miss Hope-Vere had made Mr. Home's acquaintance through Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, widow of Professor Gregory of Edinburgh. In December, 1857, Home, who was then in Paris, received a letter from the Professor, in which he wrote:—

"I have heard much from my friend Mr. Rymer and others of your powers as a medium in producing *visible* manifestations. . . . I venture to say that, if you can pay a visit to Edinburgh, Mrs. Gregory and I will be delighted to offer you a room during your stay. Do, if possible, give us the pleasure of your

<sup>1</sup> See my former work, pp. 154, 155.



company any time before May or June; and then I may hope to be able to come forward as an eye-witness of the splendid manifestations seen in your presence. In my opinion, the spiritual belief is a beautiful and elevating one, and I would give much to be able to say that I know it to be true."

Mr. Home was on the point of leaving Paris for the Court of Holland when he received this invitation, and it remained without result. Mrs. Gregory, however, had many séances with Home between the years 1860-70, and became not only a convert, but a *declared* convert to Spiritualism in consequence.

"Should you object to my sending you any more letters of introduction," writes Mrs. Gregory on June 17, 1860, after mentioning that Miss Hope-Vere had just asked her for one, "will you kindly tell me so, and I will in future refuse the request of any other friend who may apply to me. Miss Douglas told me of the interesting meetings she has had in your presence."

Home, who passed his life in sacrificing himself to his friends, was little likely to object; and Mrs. Gregory's letters show that Miss Hope-Vere was very far from being the last inquirer introduced by her. Among the names that she mentions are those of Sir William Fairfax, Mr. Mitchell (who, in his turn, was the means of bringing Mr. Buckle to a séance), Lady Elizabeth Gomm,<sup>1</sup>—"You would see how much Elizabeth Gomm was taken with Spiritualism," writes Mrs. Gregory after a séance)—Sir William Dunbar, and Mrs. Hope, sister to Lady Home.

"Sir William and Lady Gomm are to come tomorrow," Mrs. Gregory tells Home on one occasion. "On Wednesday, Captain Drayson and Lady Gomm dine with me to meet you; in the evening Mrs. Cowper comes, and I think Mr. Ruskin is coming also."

Numbers of Home's séances in years subsequent to 1860 were held at Mrs. Gregory's house in Grafton Street. The manifestations witnessed in 1864 by a

<sup>1</sup> See my former work, pp. 283, 284.

circle which included Mr. Ruskin are recorded in another chapter by Mr. William Howitt; and a subsequent séance at Mrs. Gregory's (January 30, 1866) was described by that lady herself in the second volume of "Incidents in My Life" (pp. 118-120).

"We had not been long sitting at a large table in the front drawing-room," wrote Mrs. Gregory, "when the usual manifestations began, which increased with such force that the whole room was literally shaken. . . . A large accordion was played with more than common skill while Mr. Home held it with one hand; once or twice we distinctly perceived that two hands were touching the keys; and an air which the daughter of a lady present had formerly played upon the harp was now played with variations upon the accordion. Answers were also given by the instrument, instead of by raps."

The lady present who identified the air heard by the circle as one which her daughter had formerly played on the harp is not named by Mrs. Gregory. Two or three letters in my possession refer to her, however, in connection with this séance, and apprise me that she was a Mrs. Ramsay, who had come from India not long before. The daughter who had passed away was known on earth by the pet name of *Motie* or *Mootie*, which, it appears, is Hindustani for "Pearl." During the séance a message was spelt out desiring seven of the circle, including Mr. Home, to sit for a time in the adjoining room. They did so, removing the lamp and opening the window, as was also desired by the message. Hardly had they seated themselves when raps were heard, and the following words were spelt out: "Symbol is under mother's hand for ——"

"She" (Mrs. Ramsay) "immediately told us," says Mrs. Gregory, "that she felt something like a large bead under her hand; and when the light was brought in, it was found to be an unattached pearl, which had never been bored, and had been brought to our circle by no earthly hand."

The seven now returned to the other room and rejoined the remainder of the party. Mrs. Gregory thus narrates what ensued:—

"In the midst of our conversation, Mr. Home fell into a trance. This was perhaps the most salient feature of the séance; for while in this state, which must have lasted about an hour, he appeared to be influenced or possessed by the spirit-friends who surrounded us, personating in manner those whom he had never seen, but who had been known by the several members of our circle. This was most remarkable in the case of one whom we will call by the name designated to her by Mr. Home, namely, that of Margaret—although she had only been known by that of 'Christy' as a servant in the family of one of the gentlemen present—and who had been drowned forty years ago. Mr. Home went through the action of drowning, and gave such proofs of the identity of 'Christy,' that the son of her former master (who was the gentleman present) was fain to accept them as unmistakable.

"'Margaret' had not come without an object to our séance. As there appeared to have been a slight suspicion of foul play in the manner in which she met her end, her aim was obviously to clear the character of a fellow-servant who had since joined her in the spirit-land.

L. M. GREGORY."

I have given some extracts from the letters of the Duchess of Sutherland in "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission" (pp. 191-193). A letter not quoted there furnishes me with the name of another inquirer of the year 1861. It was written on learning that the illness of Mrs. Home made it impossible for her husband to comply with the request of the Duchess for another séance at her own residence:—

"DEAR MR. HOME,—I feel that I cannot sufficiently express my regret for having intruded on you at a time of such great anxiety and sorrow, for which I feel *most sincerely*. I would not willingly have done so had I been aware that Mrs. Home's state was such as to make you fear to leave her even for an hour or two—as is indeed most natural from the sad account you give, which truly grieves me. My only excuse is one which I hope you will accept—the *intense* interest I have in the true phases of Spiritualism."

The lady who conveyed to Mr. Home the request of the Duchess of Sutherland for another séance had taken back an expression of his willingness to hold it at Cornwall Terrace, where Mr. and Mrs. Home were

then staying. In reference to this invitation, the Duchess continues :—

“Miss Thellusson has been so very kind in taking trouble for me in asking you, and is herself so excessively interested in the subject, that I should feel myself most ungrateful in having the pleasure of meeting you through her exertions without her being allowed to be present.”

A day or two later (June 5, 1861) the Duchess called on Mrs. Home. One of her letters quoted in my former work shows that she took part in a séance on this visit, and, in her own words, “was made very happy in feeling that a deeper ground of belief had been given her.”

It must have been shortly after this séance that the Duchess brought about a meeting between Mr. Home and her favourite preacher, Dr. Cumming, in the hope of the conversion of the latter to Spiritualism. Among her letters I find the following, dated only “Sunday Evening” :—

“DEAR MR. HOME,—Dr. Cumming will be most happy to call on you and Mrs. Home at three to-morrow. He is much pleased to make your acquaintance. I felt *very much* for you yesterday, at all you told me. I trust your dear wife may be less suffering to-morrow, and able to see Dr. Cumming, and that you will both like him. . . . He is most earnest and serious, though as yet doubting, about what he hopes to hear and see through you.

“I hope you will let me be present if you have anything like a séance, with him, some day soon, as my interest is so great.—Yours very sincerely,  
A. SUTHERLAND.”

Mr. Home accorded a séance to Dr. Cumming; and I find that, in lecturing subsequently to the Young Men’s Christian Association, Dr. Cumming, although refusing to admit that the manifestations investigated by him were due to the presence of departed spirits, took occasion to declare :—

“After what I have witnessed, I am quite satisfied, with all deference, that Faraday’s theory does not explain the phenomena.”

Home had several séances with Mr. Pickersgill, R.A. The date of the first two is fixed by the following note :—

"14, STRATFORD PLACE, *April 24, 1864.*

"MY DEAR MRS. HALL,—To you and Mr. Hall I feel most grateful—not forgetting Mr. Home—for so kindly allowing me the opportunity, and also Mrs. Crellin, of being present at two séances under the absorbing influence of that gentleman; but more of all this ere long.—Your faithful servant, H. W. PICKERSGILL."

"MY DEAR FRIEND," writes the old R.A. to Home in January, 1866, "I am most anxious to know if your divine power remains with you. All good angels guard you. . . . Ever yours, H. W. PICKERSGILL."

Several of Mr. Pickersgill's letters make reference to a portrait which he painted of Mr. Home. "I am going on with it," he writes in June, 1864, "but I wish you were in abler hands." And again: "Be mindful, my dear Home, that you do not risk the completion of your picture for next year. Come when you can—only do not delay too long."

The portrait was duly completed, and still exists in London. It was intended by the artist as a gift to Home, but from some unexplained cause never reached the latter. A correspondence took place on this subject twenty years afterwards, in the course of which the late Mr. S. C. Hall wrote to Mr. Home:—

"*December 1, 1884.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—It was I who introduced you to the older Pickersgill, and surely it was always understood that the portrait he painted of you was intended to be given to you.

"I believe the portrait was so painted as an act of gratitude to you for the change you had been the means, under God, of effecting in his mind by the influence of Spiritualism. When he was living at Stratford Place, I saw your portrait hanging in his studio, and I well remember him referring to it as *your* picture.

"When it was shown to me at —, I said it had no right to be there, for it was your property, painted expressly for you by the artist. . . . Ever truly and faithfully your friend,

"S. C. HALL."

In a note to this letter Mr. Home adds:—"The bust in the picture is a portrait of my wife, who passed

away in 1862, done for me by the late Joseph Durham, a dear friend of mine, who was also brought to a knowledge of the consoling truth of Spiritualism through the gift of mediumship with which I am endowed; and this renders the work of Mr. Pickersgill doubly dear to me."

Besides the old artist himself, various members of his family were among the correspondents of Mr. Home. In one letter, his daughter, Mrs. Crellin, expresses her desire to see her father a Spiritualist:—

"I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. and Mrs. Hall on Friday," Mrs. Crellin tells Home, "who emboldened me to write to ask if you could favour us so far as to afford us another opportunity of witnessing the wonderful manifestations I beheld the other evening. My father will, of course, be present; for I confess that (however anxious I feel to become a stronger convert, and to extend the knowledge to my husband and the other members of our family) my father is, in this case, the person I am most anxious about. May I then ask you to name any evening?" &c.

"My sister-in-law, Mrs. Crellin," writes Mrs. Pickersgill, jun., "told me that you had kindly promised to pay me a visit. The last day of my being in London, for a little while, has come without seeing you; and I therefore write to say that I hope to have yet the pleasure of seeing you on my return. . . . Thanking you always sincerely for allowing me to become acquainted with your extraordinary but, as yet, to me incomprehensible power, believe me, dear Mr. Home, yours truly,  
S. C. PICKERSGILL."

The correspondence of Mr. Home would furnish hundreds of letters similar to those quoted from in the preceding pages; but I have sufficiently demonstrated the fact that he was the sought, and not the seeker. English society flocked to the houses where he was likely to be seen, besieged his friends incessantly for an introduction, and showed the utmost eagerness to obtain an invitation to his séances. Robert Bell, in the *Cornhill*, might well express his astonishment that Home could preserve his simplicity of life and character in the midst of the flatteries and entreaties showered on him from every hand. "He is exceedingly modest in his self-assertion," wrote Bell, "considering how sorely he is tempted to put on airs of mystical egotism

by the rabid curiosity and gaping credulity with which he is notoriously persecuted."

Home remained to the end of his career such as Bell depicts him, preserving his noble simplicity, and never losing patience with the curious intruders who crowded to see him. His frank courtesy and his affability, without affectation or pretension, were the same to all. Instead of cheating the imagination with enthusiastic dreams, he sought always to follow the path of the truth, and never deceiving himself, he did not deceive others. The probity and loyalty of his character leave their mark on that varied correspondence with both sceptics and believers which he never turned to account—proving thus how little value he attached to the applause of men, and with what unreserve he committed himself to God. His nature was indeed unlike the false, ridiculous, and illogical ideas formed of him; but it has always been observable that the grander a truth, the more numerous and senseless are the hallucinations concerning it.

Errors were committed regarding his position in society, as well as the light in which he regarded his mission. Some persons made application for séances in the belief that they could be bought, and were disappointed to learn that they had taken a certain means of ensuring a refusal of their request. Thus, in 1855, Mr. Home felt compelled to decline giving a séance to Mr. Edward Buller, who had approached him in the mistaken belief that "although he did not exhibit his powers for money, he would not refuse to accept a moderate gratuity from those who have the opportunity of witnessing his powers." In May, 1864, Dr. George Macdonald, on learning the error he had committed on the same subject, applied to Mrs. Gregory for an introduction, but found that the refusal of a séance which he had received from Mr. Home was final.

Among Home's papers is a copy of a letter written by him in 1860 on the occasion of some very annoying intrusions on his privacy which would have been in very

bad taste but for the blunder that gave rise to them. As the letter is an excellent illustration of the manner in which Home knew how to vindicate his position at need, I copy it without further preface :—

“MADAM,—I trust your Ladyship will pardon the liberty I am about to take, but my position seems to have been so strangely misunderstood that an explanation seems the only thing that will set all right. The Sunday evening that I had the honour of receiving Lady Salisbury at my house, she spoke of Lord Cecil as desiring to know me. I then said that I was at home every Tuesday to any one who might call to converse with me on the subject which so deeply interests me and my friends. Some strange mistake seems to have been made, which has subjected me to much unpleasantness, inasmuch as people are taking the liberty of presenting themselves, and, without more ado, desire that ‘I should make the table move, or do something amusing.’ Some persons have this instant left my house who said they came from Lady Salisbury and Lady Mary Craven, and who, as soon as they entered, said they had ‘come to see the table dance,’ and asked me when I would ‘*exhibit*.’

“For a cause which I know to be a truthful one I am ever willing to bear with much that is wounding to my feelings; but when my position, and that of my wife, is so seriously misunderstood, I do not feel called upon to be *almost* insulted.

“I urge no one to become acquainted with me; but I must expect that, when they do know me, they will not forget that I am a *private* gentleman and my wife a lady, who, both by birth and education, is the equal of any.”

From some letters contained in Home’s correspondence, I find that he paid a short visit to York in the July of 1861. In the *Spiritual Magazine* for September following, the subjoined description of a séance at York was given :—

“I send you an account of my first spiritual séance. By the kindness of Mr. Home, and of the lady at whose house he was stopping, I was admitted to a séance at eight o’clock on Saturday, 13th July. We sat round a common drawing-room table in the twilight, close to the open window—a party of six, viz., Mr. and Mrs. Home, the lady of the house, two gentlemen, and myself. In about ten minutes the table trembled—it did not vibrate, it literally trembled.”

Raps, movements of the table, and others of the ordinary phenomena followed; and finally Home passed into a trance. The narrator thus describes the communications made to her :—



"Mr. Home spoke of my mother, of my childish troubles, and of a brother. In fact, though he had never heard of me before that day, he knew all my history. He then said, 'There are other spirits behind your chair—Elizabeth, Mary, and Harriet.' The two first puzzled me, but Harriet I knew well. She was my old schoolfellow and earliest friend. I begged Mr. Home to describe her. He directly began scribbling (she was a great writer), and looked very merry. Soon after my chair was playfully pushed twice—just what Harriet might have done had she been present in the body, for she was full of fun. Elizabeth, I feel convinced, was an elderly friend of mine. Never having called her by her Christian name, it did not occur to me till the next day. Mary was a puzzle till the following Monday, when I received a letter informing me she had been some months gone.

"Mr. Home expressed his regret that it had been so poor a séance. I thought it could not have been more satisfactory; and let me here thank him for his very great kindness to a perfect stranger.—ANN BRANCKER, 15 Little Blake Street, York."

In the October number of the *Spiritual Magazine* for 1861, the following narrative appeared:—

"15, BASINGHALL STREET, June 12, 1861.

"This evening I was present at a sitting for spirit manifestations at the residence of Mrs. P——" (Mrs. Parkes), "Regent's Park. The party consisted of seven, including Mr. and Mrs. Home. The room was a large back drawing-room; in one corner there was a kind of flower-stand pedestal, and on it were a number of bronze gods and goddesses, sacred bulls, &c.—the idols brought by Mrs. P. from India.

"I took rough notes in pencil as the phenomena took place.

"On sitting down at the loo table, all present placed their hands on it; and in two or three minutes the heavy table trembled or quivered, and then rose from off the ground several inches."

The next manifestation was the playing of an accordion by invisible agency. The narrator continues:—

"At this time a small hand was seen by the sitters under the lace fall of Mrs. S—— W——, raising the lace. The accordion was then handed to Mrs. W—— (who had never been at a sitting before), and in her hand it was played. By sounds or 'raps' were spelled out the words 'Mary Cos. H——,' the name of a loved sister of Mrs. S—— W——, long deceased. 'Charles' was next spelt in like manner, but she knew of no Charles. 'Yes, Charles;' but still no recognition. Mr. Home then suddenly went into the trance; and gave such a description of his appearance and manner, that Mrs. W—— recognised her late grandson, whose name at birth

she had wished to be Charles, but the wish had been overruled, and another name was given.

"Immediately after, Mrs. W——, who was sitting next to me with her hands on the table, had a hand again placed under her lace fall. I saw it plainly rise and lift up the fall. It was like the hand of a young girl—delicately formed, and the fingers long and taper. The hand was within about twelve inches of me.—JOHN JONES."

Mr. Jones appeared before the Committee of the Dialectical Society in 1869, and gave particulars of numerous manifestations witnessed by him subsequently to the above :—

"I once saw a spirit-hand at a séance which was held in the house of a Cabinet Minister," he stated. "Several persons of note were present. The room was well lighted. I have seen Mr. Home's levitations. I saw him rise and float horizontally across the window. We all saw him clearly. He passed right across, just as a person might float upon the water. This took place at the house of Mr. Milner Gibson.

"I saw a vacant chair rise in the air, float over a lady, pass in front of Mr. Home (whose hands were on the table), and ascend vertically over my head; then the chair descended and touched my head, rose again, floated in the air, and descended on a loo table.

"At another sitting I saw Mr. Home rise in the air, and I held his hands while he was rising.

"On one occasion, Mr. Home had taken an accordion by the rim, so that every one could see that there was no communication made with the keys, which perceptibly moved, and the most exquisite music was produced. In order to show that Mr. Home was not producing the sound himself, a hand was placed over his mouth."

Mr. Jones also described a séance which took place at his own house, Enmore Park, Norwood, with Mr. Home, on July 17, 1868. A circle of ten chairs had been arranged in the drawing-room, three of which were left vacant—"to represent," said Mr. Jones, "my late wife, my late daughter, and son."

An accordion was played, untouched by any of the seven persons present. One of the vacant chairs rose and floated in the air. An article of dress that had been laid on another chair "began to move," testified the witness, "rose like a living substance, and moved over to and on my mother's knee, in sight of us all.

"My mother, with the chair she was sitting on,

gently rose in the air three times. The last time her knees were level with the rim of the loo table. Her hands were crossed on her breast."

Finally, another of the chairs that had been left empty "quietly glided away from the table," says Mr. Jones, "passed round the rear of my chair, and came to my left side; then, with an undulating motion, floated up off the ground to a level with the rim of the loo table; the accordion at the same time playing a sweet, gentle strain of music."

At Enmore Park, Norwood, on May 10, 1869, there was held another séance, to which Mr. Jones also referred in his evidence before the Dialectical Society. The investigators who met Mr. Home on that occasion consisted, he stated, "of two editors of district newspapers and four gentlemen of good standing, all of whom laughed at Spiritualism."

One of the local editors in question published in his journal, the *Norwood News*, on May 22, 1869, a lengthy description of the phenomena which he had investigated. I extract the leading particulars of his narrative:—

"The following account of a séance held on Monday, the 10th inst., at Mr. Jones's house, Enmore Park, will probably be interesting to many of our readers:—

"Mr. Jones had invited to his house, to meet Mr. Home, Dr. Cresswell, Mr. A. Bremner, of Albert Road, South Norwood; the proprietor of the *Croydon Advertiser*, and the editor of this paper. The room in which the party assembled was large and well lighted. We were invited to inspect the table which was to be operated upon. There certainly appeared to be no secret mechanism in the table itself, or in any way connected with it. The cloth having been removed from the table, we all sat round it.

"After sitting for some ten or fifteen minutes, a slight vibration of the table was felt, and then raps were heard, apparently on various parts of the table. These raps were heard for some time—sometimes more and sometimes less distinct. They were heard also when Mr. Home's hands were off the table. The sceptics (Dr. Cresswell, Mr. Bremner, Mr. Ward, and ourselves) looked in turn under the table at Mr. Home's legs and feet during the continuance of the sitting, and they were quite motionless. The table then rose slightly off the ground."

A message was next spelt. out by raps, and the table was made light and heavy at request. "Each of the sceptics," says the *Norwood News*, "tried this experiment in turn, and with the same result."

"The chairs also moved, and the room appeared to shake, whilst raps were heard on the walls, the windows, and the table itself. An accordion of Mr. Jones's, which had been previously inspected by the sceptics, was observed to rock upon the table; and Mr. Home having asked whether the spirits wanted to play upon it, and being answered in the affirmative, held the accordion at arm's length by the lower end of it (that is, not the key-end) under the table; one of the sceptics moving his seat, so that he could observe the movements of the accordion. The accordion then commenced playing; and 'The Blue Bells of Scotland' being mentioned by Mr. Bremner, a bar or two of that air was played. Then Mr. Jones asked for some echoes; and a series of echoes proceeded from the accordion, with remarkable precision and a very beautiful effect. Mr. Ward was asked to look under the table: he did so, and saw the accordion playing—Mr. Home only holding it by the reverse end, and with one hand, his other hand being upon the table.

"We confess ourselves totally unable to discover the cause or the motive power of what we here relate. Mr. Home was at times sitting away from the table when raps were heard and movements felt. We were allowed to watch him as closely as we pleased. We were permitted to examine the furniture, to move it about, to make any remarks, and to ask any questions we pleased. . . .

"We went to Mr. Jones's house disbelieving his statement of facts; we saw phenomena which were sufficient to show us that all he has related could occur by the same power, whatever that power may be."

"The real *crux* and puzzle of the business," wrote Mr. P. P. Alexander, after his séance in Edinburgh with Mr. Home, "does not lie in these physical phenomena, but in the *intelligence* which sits hid behind them, and uses them as its media of expression." I have already offered much evidence in elucidation of their *crux* to those who are of Mr. Alexander's way of thinking; and in the course of the ensuing chapter I hope to make some valuable additions to the testimony concerning spirit-identity contained in this and my former volume.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE CHAWNER SÉANCES AND OTHERS.

*"August 29th, 1864.*

"DEAR MR. HOME, . . . My father is very sorry not to have had the pleasure of again seeing you before your departure for America. Should your departure be delayed, however, and you would like a change for a few days, he will be delighted to offer you such hospitality as he is able, and desires me to add that, 'in power or out of power, you will always be welcome.'—Believe me, yours sincerely,

"E. H. CHAWNER."

When compiling my former work, I could only mention that Home went on a visit to the Chawner family at Newton Vallence, near Alton, Hampshire; that séances were held during his stay, and that an extraordinary report concerning one of them was subsequently circulated in English society.

An evil spirit, it was said, had presented himself to the circle under an angelic disguise, but had been put to flight by the exorcisms of a lady present. On inquiry being made by some of the friends of Home, this startling fiction resolved itself into the fact that the lady referred to had "tried the spirits" by coming to a séance with the Lord's Prayer and various texts of Scripture written on small slips of paper, which she had placed between her rings and her fingers, and in the pockets of her dress. In spite of these impromptu exorcisms, numerous manifestations occurred, and some of them were especially addressed to the exorcist herself.

The full history of the séance in question, and of

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another, equally remarkable, which succeeded it, is now in my possession, in the form of two narratives written by Captain Edward Henry Chawner of the very striking manifestations which he and his family were privileged to witness, and the convincing proofs of spirit-identity which they received during the stay of Mr. Home at Newton Vallence in the spring of 1864. Captain Chawner was no Spiritualist previous to these occurrences, as his own declarations will sufficiently show. The letter which contains them was addressed by him to the *Spiritual Magazine*, and appeared in the issue of that periodical for the month of August, 1864. It is headed "Newton Vallence, Alton, Hants, May 24th."

"I have been requested by a friend and relative," wrote Captain Chawner, "to give a detailed account of some spirit-manifestations witnessed by myself and various members of my family through the mediumship of Mr. Home. My experience up to this time had not satisfied me. I had been grossly cheated on a former occasion; so grossly, that I began to think all mediums must be knaves, and those who resorted to them fools. I formed one of the party assembled under my father's roof to meet Mr. Home, with a predisposition against mediums in general. It is true I had visited none but paid ones, and, as such, to be judged of with extreme caution and distrust. I found Mr. Home a man of very different calibre. He came down to us with my relative as a friend. He was my father's guest for two days. From what occurred during the two evenings he spent with us, I unhesitatingly affirm my belief in the supernaturalism of the manifestations, and I bear a willing testimony to the fairness and courtesy shown us by Mr. Home. Collusion is out of the question; we did not assemble to make fools of one another. Delusion I equally repudiate. Every facility was offered us for examination. We looked under the table, and some of us even sat under it. I am convinced as I am of my own individuality, that Mr. Home could not have caused by any known human agency the phenomena we witnessed. . . .

"Our circle consisted the first evening of nine persons, of whom five were ladies and four gentlemen. Two of the ladies were personally unknown to all in the room, though we were well acquainted with their relatives, with whom they were then staying in the neighbourhood, and whose place they had taken, owing to the absence of one (their host) and the indisposition of the other (their hostess). We did not even know their names, or dream of their existence, till the evening in question."

One of the two ladies thus accidentally—but there is no element of accident in human affairs—thus unexpectedly introduced to the Chawner family was Mrs. Brunker (wife of General Brunker), and the other appears to have been her daughter.

“The third lady,” continues Captain Chawner, “was a Mrs. H——, an old friend and neighbour. The fourth and fifth were wife and sister to the writer. Of the gentlemen, one was father, the other brother-in-law to the writer. Mr. Home and the writer formed the quartette.”

The brother-in-law and sister of Captain Chawner were a Mr. and Mrs. Hampden Gledstanes. The circle was thus constituted as follows:—Mr. Chawner, sen., Captain and Mrs. Chawner, Mr. and Mrs. Gledstanes, Mrs. H——, Mrs. Brunker and her daughter, and Mr. Home. Some of the most remarkable of the manifestations witnessed were especially addressed to the two last-named ladies—perfect strangers, not only to Mr. Home, but to all the other persons present.

“At Mr. Home’s request,” writes Captain Chawner, “we seated ourselves at an ordinary-sized round drawing-room table. We had not been seated more than a few minutes, before a tremulous motion was felt in the table, and also a sensible but gentle vibration in our chairs. On putting the ear close to the table a curious noise was detected, as if a number of pin-points had been jobbed against its surface. These were not heard by all. I heard them distinctly myself. The table then began to oscillate and tip from side to side, and a light rapping was heard on different parts of the table, under our chairs, and at the back of some of the pictures—in fact, all around us. Mr. Home said he thought a communication could be obtained; when, as if in response, the raps became more frequent and louder. . . .

“Mr. Home now desired any one at the table to take pencil and paper and call out the alphabet, and as the raps came to any letter to write it down. My brother-in-law took the pencil; and first one and then another repeated the alphabet.

“*Question.* ‘If you are a spirit, what is your name?’

“*Answer.* ‘George.’

“No one seemed for a moment to connect the name with any one in particular. All at once, however, the younger of the two strange ladies exclaimed, ‘Oh, mamma! Why, it is not George ——’ then suddenly stopped short.

"*Question.* 'What is your other name?'

"*Answer.* 'Page.'

"I shall never forget, as long as I live, the expressions of wonder, astonishment, and delight that succeeded each other on the expressive faces of both mother and daughter. Though nothing to us that name, to them it was a whole history. They were breathless with interest and excitement.

"*Q.* 'What do you want to say to us?'

"*A.* 'I, George Page, am come to thank you for all your kindness to me. I must have been very troublesome at times, Marianne.'

"*Q.* 'Could mortal woman have done more for you than Ellen did?'

"*A.* 'No; Ellen *Hare* always did right.'

"*Q.* 'Did you always know how much she loved you?'

"*A.* 'Yes, yes!'

"*Q.* 'Did you always love her?'

"*A.* 'I loved her more than my mother. Tell her this. Sometimes I did see strange things; it was not all madness. God be with you both.'"

Captain Chawner now proceeds to describe various phenomena which succeeded these spirit-messages. One of the manifestations, as will be seen, was directly connected with the spirit who had communicated with Mrs. Brunker and her daughter, and constituted a further proof of his identity.

"An accordion," writes Captain Chawner, "was played on in the most ravishing manner in Mr. Home's hand under the table. We had full opportunity of looking under the table while it so played. I requested that the instrument might be played upon whilst in my hand. I held it upside down with one hand. With no *visible* agent near, it was first gently shaken, then pulled, and a few chords struck. Afterwards the pulls and jerks were so forcible that it was with difficulty I could hold it. Another note or two was sounded, and then it remained quiet. I was sitting three feet off Mr. Home when this occurred, between my wife and sister. Mr. Home had both hands on the table the while. The accordion I had borrowed a few hours previous in our post-town, and Mr. Home never saw it until that evening."

The touch of spirit-hands was now felt by Mrs. Brunker and her daughter.

"The younger lady's hand," says Captain Chawner, "was grasped under the table by what she declared was a hand, and she remarked to her mother a peculiarity in the grasp by which she could identify it. I then requested that my hand might be shaken. I put my



hand half under the table, resting the wrist upon my knee. In that position *something* resembling a hand slid up under the back of mine, *but I could see nothing*. I also remarked on the peculiarity of the action, which was explained later on.

“ ‘We must go ; good night,’ was rapped out. No more noises were heard, our chairs ceased vibrating, and all was still. The two ladies who had asked the various questions, and to whom all the answers were made, then gave us the following explanation of what, up to this time, was Greek to us all :—

“ George Page was a very dear friend of theirs, lately dead, for whom they were still in mourning. He had died of softening of the brain, had been engaged to the elder lady’s sister, Ellen Hare, for several years, but the match was broken off owing to his malady. ‘Marianne’ was her own Christian name ; she and her daughter had attended him through his last illness until his death. The expression, ‘I loved her more than my mother’ was a way he had of expressing his love for Ellen Hare. He had also an odd way during his illness of taking persons’ hands by *sliding* his own underneath theirs.

“ Bear in mind that these two ladies *were utter strangers to all in the room ; even their names were unknown*. We knew no more of their past life than we do of futurity. My brother-in-law, who wrote the letters down as they came, did not know how the sentences read until we had divided the words, for the letters were written down without word-division. . . .

“ I have purposely suppressed the real names at the request of the two ladies. They were uncommon names—one especially so ; yet they were rapped out without the slightest hesitation.

“ EDWARD HENRY CHAWNER.”

I have supplied, as far as is in my power, the particulars which Captain Chawner suppressed. Part of the evidence that enables me to identify Mrs. Brunker will be found in my former work (p. 225) ; and I may add that frequent mention of her name occurs in letters not quoted there. It might have been thought that Mrs. Brunker would have accepted the identity of the spirit communicating with her as incontestable after such conclusive evidence—furnished, too, at her first séance with Mr. Home, whom she had never seen before, and to whom her very name was unknown. But the lady had come to the séance with a preconceived theory concerning the manifestations ; and although the texts slipped inside her rings and the prayers in her pockets had not driven away the spirits—although,

on the contrary, their most convincing manifestations were addressed to herself, Mrs. Brunker held firmly to her theory, as the following extract from a letter dated March 19, 1866, will show:—

“70, LANCASTER GATE, W.

“MY DEAR MISS CAMERON,—I am very much obliged to you for telling me of Mr. Home’s answer to my story” (*i.e.*, the story of the demon that had presented himself in angelic guise to the circle at Newton Vallence). “The lady who told it is the wife of General Brunker, who has just got an appointment of importance in India. I will try to get the relation of the séance written down; it took place when Mr. Home was staying with the Chawner family at Newton, near Selborne, in Hampshire. Mrs. Brunker said that ‘she had the Lord’s Prayer in her pocket, and her gloves full of texts.’ . . . Mrs. Brunker and her sister, Mrs. Benn, are, I dare-say, honestly afraid of Spiritualism, and convinced that the spirits are evil ones.

“There can be no doubt as to the reality of the phenomena in the minds of those who have fairly inquired into them. I believe the true difficulty to be that the whole of the religious world, of every denomination, is strongly opposed to Spiritualism—the scientific opposition is nothing in comparison. . . . Very truly yours,

“JANE ALEXANDER.”

Mrs. Alexander obtained from one of the ladies of the Chawner family an account of the séance at which Mrs. Brunker had been present, and a copy of it was subsequently forwarded by her to Mr. Home. I have given the greater portion of it in my former work. One passage is so delightfully illustrative of the very strong faith entertained by very many persons in the Omnipotence of Evil, that I cannot resist reproducing it:—

“Mrs. Brunker had texts and the Lord’s Prayer about her, and inside her rings, written on a tiny piece of paper. . . . Several things about one who was dear to her came out at this séance—indeed, he appeared himself; and this brings me to the real point of Mrs. B.’s ideas on the subject. She and her sister, Mrs. Benn, feel convinced that, though *to all appearance* it was this gentleman—there was even his peculiar shake of the hand, also a phrase quite peculiar to himself was used—yet, with all this, they feel convinced that it was not he himself, but an evil spirit personating him with his peculiarities that appeared to them. I said, ‘Why should an evil spirit know his ways and phrases, &c.?’ She answered, ‘That

is the argument used, but very easily met. The Arch-Fiend knows all about us and all our peculiarities, and makes use of that knowledge in his temptations—and so, for his purpose, he can tell all his emissaries. I believe, in every case, it is an evil spirit that personates our dear lost friends.’”

After arriving at such an appalling conclusion, Mrs. Brunker, it will be thought, must have registered a vow never to be present at another séance. Not at all! Letters from Lady Shelley and a Mrs. Constantia Ellicott, during the years 1865 and 1866, speak of attempts made by them, *in company with Mrs. Brunker*, to obtain communications with the spirit-world when Mr. Home was not present. Such is the inconsistency of human nature!—even of the prejudiced, narrow natures that see in the most marvellous manifestations of Spiritualism only so many proofs the more that evil is omniscient and omnipotent.

The evening after the séance at which Mrs. Brunker was unhappy enough to detect the Evil One in the guise of a relative of hers, a second séance was held at Newton Vallence. The sitters present, besides Mr. Home, were Mr. Chawner, sen., Captain and Mrs. E. H. Chawner, Mr. and Mrs. Hampden Gledstones, Mrs. Brunker, Mrs. H——, and Mr. Mundy, bailiff to Mr. Chawner, senior. From the *Spiritual Magazine* for January, 1865, I extract Captain E. H. Chawner’s account of the second and even more remarkable series of manifestations witnessed by himself and his family. It will be seen that they were among the many witnesses to the fact of Home’s levitation:—

“NEWTON VALLENCE, August 6th, 1864.

“As you have granted me a hearing in the August number of your magazine,” wrote Captain Chawner to the editor, “I hasten to give you my promised narrative of our second séance with Mr. Home. Our circle consisted of the same number of persons as on the previous evening, though not entirely of the same individuals. The elder of the two stranger ladies present on the former evening was not accompanied by her daughter—much to our regret, as she seemed to be what the French term *sympathique*, and very open to spirit-influence. Her place was filled by a very different person—my father’s bailiff, Mr. Mundy—a common-sense, hard-working

Christian, and not at all one to be led by imagination, and so, practically, better for purposes of investigation. We seated ourselves in chance order at the same table as before; Mr. Home taking his seat a few moments after we had assembled. *But before he had approached the table, we felt the same gentle, oscillatory motion in the table and our chairs as on the previous occasion.* All felt it more or less. Mr. Mundy describes it to be as if he were on the deck of a steamer.<sup>1</sup> On Mr. Home drawing his chair to the table, the motion ceased instantaneously. Two or three times that evening the same thing occurred. Mr. Home, in explanation, said, 'Whenever I am in great power these manifestations take place before I approach the table, and cease for an instant when I seat myself. I am in great power to-night.' Whilst saying this, the rapping and the trembling of the table and our chairs increased. The raps were all over the table, and very loud, as though the table had been struck sharply with the knuckles, and seemed far more vehement and imperative than we had hitherto heard them. Our large dining-room table came forward from the wall nearly to the table round which we were seated; and a chair, which was standing by itself at one end of the room, slid along the carpet close behind my chair. The following messages were then rapped out; my brother-in-law and myself alternately taking the pencil and calling out the alphabet:—

"*Question (by Mr. Home).* 'Is there a spirit present?'

"*Answer.* 'Yes.'

"*Q. (by one of us, I forget whom).* 'What do you want to say?'

"*A.* 'My dear Ned, I watch over you. Be patient, you will be cared for.—Henry, your father.'

"This message was written down letter by letter, without word-division, and we had to spell it over afterwards before we could understand it. I mention this to show that we did not aid by any guesses of our own. While this communication was being given, my father was touched invisibly in several places, and the chair in which he sat was shaken with a kind of tremulous motion. . . .

"Mr. Home took up the accordion, holding it upside down, resting his hand upon his knee.

"*Question (by myself).* 'If you are the spirit of my grandfather, will you play on the accordion some air you were fond of?'

"*Answer.* 'Yes.'

"The instrument then began to play; but we could not make out any tune; it seemed a mere jumble. We felt disappointed at this; when, as if to compensate us, it was rapped out that the spirit would play on it whilst held by my father. The instrument was put into his hand; he held it upside down, resting his hand on his knee in such a manner that it was plainly visible to all of us. He was seated in an arm-chair, which, owing to its arms, could not be brought very close to the table.

<sup>1</sup> Many other observers of this vibration applied the same description to it. See "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," p. 167 and elsewhere.

"In that position the accordion was played upon by the invisible power, and the volume of sound elicited from it was such as to fill us with wonder. I am perfectly certain *no mortal fingers* could have caused such sounds. We did not know what air it was, but a more exact imitation of the organ could not be executed. My father had great difficulty in holding the accordion, and was obliged at last to ask us to take it away, as it was being pulled so hard. My father, besides being unacquainted with music, is completely paralysed in one half of his body; and we are prepared to take oath that Mr. Home did not touch the instrument while being played; his hands were both laid flat upon the table.

"The organ was my grandfather's favourite instrument, and the *peculiar tremulous shake* that finished the performance was to us both very striking; it reminded us so of his touch, which from his great age became very shaky. We made this remark at the time. For my own part, it took me back to the last time I heard him play on the organ, in the very room in which we were then seated—a period some twenty years past.

"My father was very much excited by this manifestation, and would have wished to have asked many other questions, but could think of none at the time. After a pause, he said he should like to shake hands with his father. This is what ensued:—His hand, which was resting motionless on his knee, was drawn off without his being able to prevent it, and pulled under the table nearly as far as the shoulder, and a hand, covered in what seemed to him some delicate fabric, grasped his. Afterwards the covering substance was withdrawn, and a hand, warm, fleshy, and instinct with life, rested in his! A peculiar feature in this manifestation was, that the sleeve of my father's coat was puckered up, creased, and dragged tightly towards his wrist, *although we could see nothing that should cause this appearance, his hand and arm being plainly visible to us all*. If any one had grasped the coat-sleeve, it would have caused exactly the same effect. An exclamation of 'Good God! *something* is pulling me under the table, and my hand is grasped by a hand as of flesh—how wonderful!' broke from him. I then asked if my hand might be grasped; and an answer being returned in the affirmative, I placed my hand under the table; but instead of feeling a hand, something came and leaned heavily against my knees, and touched me on the arm. My youngest sister's hand was grasped at her request. While these things were occurring, we had been touched on our hands, feet, and other parts of our persons. Mr. Mundy several times looked under the table to find out what had touched him, and moved his chair.

"On asking the question, 'How can we tell that these are good spirits that come, and that this is lawful?' it was answered, 'By their works ye shall know them.' The stranger lady" (Mrs. Bruncker) "and myself had been discussing this point before the séance, at one end of the drawing-room, whilst Mr. Home was at the

other end, seated at the piano and singing various songs for my wife and others. I had, in the course of argument, used this quotation, and we were struck by its repetition. . . .

"We got no more answers from this spirit, who was succeeded by another making quite different raps, more gentle and hesitating, and giving out quite another sound. On asking the question, 'Who are you?' the name 'Elizabeth' was rapped out, and my wife's chair was considerably shaken, and her dress pulled and scratched; she also felt something touching her. She said, 'Is it somebody that knows me and wants to speak to me?' The following message was then given:—'My own Sydney, I watch over and love all you love.—Elizabeth.' Her hand was, at her request, grasped and shaken. I requested a like favour, but it was not granted. My wife's brother was then touched, and all his questions were answered by taps on the back of his hands. The former loud raps now returned, and appeared, so to speak, to endeavour to take the place of those of the then manifesting power, and the communications became confused. We now observed a strange appearance in Mr. Home; he appeared to be agitated and ill at ease, and somewhat alarmed. He said that he felt himself strangely influenced by spirit-power, that a spirit had possession of him, and that its power was so great that he was almost frightened. On observing him, we could see the muscles of his body, more especially those of his arms, braced up to the extremest tension; his arms were thrown convulsively above his head. I felt his arms; they were perfectly hard and rigid. . . . Seeing some alarm depicted on our faces, he told us not to be afraid; not to speak to him, or make any observation; only to look at him.

"He rose slowly from his chair—or rather, I should say, appeared to be raised by some effect apart from his proper volition into a standing position; *then, to our amazement, we saw him gradually rising off the ground, rigid and motionless, except in this upward movement.* Higher and higher he rose by slow degrees, until his knees appeared above the table. *We saw a gradually increasing space between his feet and the floor, he being suspended in the air, clear of all contact with surrounding objects.* An unfortunate exclamation of 'Good God! he is rising up from the ground into the air!' appeared to act like the force of gravity, for down suddenly dropped Mr. Home into his chair. He appeared somewhat annoyed, and indeed expressed himself to that effect, saying, 'I told you not to speak to me or make any observation. The power has left me.' That Mr. Home was very much exhausted, mentally and physically, was patent to us all, and the impression was one of relief when we saw his face regain its natural expression. He said afterwards he had seldom been subject to such a strong and determined influence.

"Our séance was at an end."

In spite, however, of the séance being at an end, one

or two manifestations were observed after the sitters had left the table. Captain Chawner relates that a small pencil, which had been used in writing down the messages, flew across the room and lighted on the head of his brother-in-law, Mr. Hampden Gledstanes, and that "a lady who would not take part in the séance felt her dress pulled in various directions. Mr. Home was several yards from her."

"I have given this account of the two séances with Mr. Home," says Captain Chawner, in conclusion, "from the conviction that it is only by giving publicity to such facts that any satisfactory conclusion can be generally attained. There are thousands who could, *if they would*, come forward and state similar experiences, but the fear of ridicule keeps them back. To them I would say that the search after truth is never ridiculous, let the issue be what it may.

"My opinion as to the moral character of these spirits is that they are not necessarily either devils or saints. . . .

"EDWARD HENRY CHAWNER."

The honourable action of Captain Chawner in placing his experiences on record has enabled me to rescue two very interesting séances of the year 1864 from oblivion, but that same year saw scores of séances, at least as remarkable, thrown away on investigators too careless to preserve an account of the phenomena, or too timid to publish it. Where is the history of the séances held in 1864 with Mr. Ruskin, Sir Charles Nicholson, Sir Daniel Cooper, Mr. S. C. Hall, Lord Lytton, Mr. Heaphy, Lady Shelley, Mr. Bellew, Mrs. Cowper, &c.? I have gathered a few fragments of testimony concerning them in this and my former volume, but the mass of the facts are lost, and the witnesses on whom it was most incumbent to preserve them have left them to perish. Where I have obtained any particulars, it has been from other sources.

It will be remarked that Mrs. Brunker and the Chawner family were favoured with very distinct proofs of the identity of the spirits communicating with them. A letter of the year 1863 may be given here as a pendant to their experiences, although the details which it supplies are somewhat meagre :—

"49, QUAI HENRI IV., DIEPPE, 13th October, 1863.

"MY DEAR MR. HOME,—My dear son-in-law, Colonel Evans, is staying with us, and I think you may like to hear that your vision of his little darling has proved an inestimable comfort to him. Your description was *perfect*; our poor little Fannie was remarkable for her *long*, large eyes and the dimple on her cheek. I thought you might like to hear this.

"I hear that you are not well. I hope such may not be the case; for I assure you, we who have had the privilege of your acquaintance must ever feel a deep and lasting interest in you and yours. . . . My husband and daughter unite in my expression of sincere regard and friendship.  
M. R. GAMBIER."

An account of two of the many séances which Mr. Home held at The Priory, Malvern, has been kindly furnished to me by Mrs. Honywood, from her notes taken at the time. The Miss Lockhart mentioned in the narrative was the lady who wrote to Home some years later (see my former work, p. 249): "I should never have confidence in any medium but you; so how can I persuade Mrs. Anfrère to see Spiritualism in any other form?"

"In September, 1862," writes Mrs. Honywood, "I went to Malvern, and there met Mr. Home at Dr. Gully's. We sat at a card-table: Dr. Gully, his sister, Miss Lockhart, Sir W———, and another gentleman. There was a lamp on the table in the centre of the room, and a fire burning. Raps were heard; the table rose from the ground and floated in the air. We all felt a strong vibration in the floor and in the table, which gave me an uncomfortable sensation as though I were in a steamer.

"We heard the sound of a drum—faintly at first, as though it were in the distance; then it approached, and grew louder; then seemed to be in the room—on the walls—on the table—on Miss Lockhart's knee. It was the regular beating of the drum. Five raps signified a wish for the alphabet, and we were told that the invisible drummer came for Miss L.; that he had known her in life, had been in the army, was musical, and had often sung with her.

"Dr. Gully's little child came and patted his head; he told us he could feel the touch quite plainly.

"The accordion was asked for. We each held it in turn, and several chords were played. Most of those present said they had a difficulty in holding the instrument when it was pulled; but when I held it between me and Miss Lockhart, instead of its being pulled from me, I felt it gently pushed towards me, and some soft sounds were emitted. When it was held by Mr. Home, several tunes were played—'The Last Rose of Summer,' a beautiful 'Hymn of Praise,'



and then 'God Save the Queen.' He held it, as we had all done, with one hand only. A message was given; and then 'Good night. God bless you all.' While the word God was rapped out, the table rose, and floated between each letter higher and longer than it had done before.

"Dr. Gully kindly asked me again, and we sat down nine in number—Dr. Gully, his two sisters, two Misses French, Mr. Bovill, an engineer, Miss Lockhart, Mr. Home, and myself. Raps, heavings, and vibrations occurred as before, and again the drummer came. At first the sound was faint and distant, but it increased in volume, and again died away. It was again signified to Miss Lockhart that the drummer was an old friend of hers, and the initials of his name were given. She recognised him as a cousin.

"A hand came under the table-cloth and grasped Mr. Home so vigorously that he started. It pulled Miss Lockhart's dress, and she asked to be touched. Her dress was rustled a little, and the hand grasped hers through her dress. Mr. Home remarked what a large, powerful hand it was, and she said that her cousin was a large and powerful man. My dress was repeatedly pulled.

"Several messages were given. Mr. Bovill was told that a relation of his was present, who proved to be an aunt whom he had never known. Miss French was much affected by a message from her father.

"The accordion was asked for, and most beautifully played—grand, glorious, full tones were brought out, such as I had never thought an accordion capable of producing. Miss Lockhart held it, and asked for an air; but it was only picked out note by note, and she was told that her cousin could not play it. The instrument was then lifted up. The room had been somewhat darkened by the lamp being lowered, but the fire had been stirred, so that every object in the room was perfectly distinct. Mr. Home's arm we saw raised, holding the accordion, and several notes were played in the air; but the position was so painful that he begged it might be lowered. We saw the instrument drawn out in a straight line with Mr. Home's hand, in which position it was impossible it should be played, unless held on both sides.

"During the séance, Mr. Home said that a spirit named Charles and one named Robert were near me—my brother and my cousin—but they were unable to communicate."

The impression made on Miss Lockhart by the manifestations she witnessed and the proofs of spirit-identity she received is declared by her as follows, in one of her letters to Mr. Home:—

"Now farewell, and God bless you and bestow on you full measure of the happiness and comfort you have

been so often the means of giving to others. I know you don't like to be thanked, but out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and neither you nor any living being can ever measure the comfort and help I derive from the events of the last three weeks, because you cannot know the need I had of it. . . .

"Always most sincerely yours, P. M. LOCKHART."

The séance at Malvern just described by Mrs. Honeywood took place within a few weeks of certain séances at Ryde, of which almost all I know is from the letters of the Prince of Solms. Mr. Home had gone to Ryde on the same errand as to Malvern, in search of the repose of mind and body which were sorely needed by him after many months of torturing anxiety and of untiring devotion to his dying wife. He was allowed very little of the hoped-for rest. Go where he would, entreaties for séances were constantly pressed on him, and even in the midst of such suffering, both of mind and body, as the summer of 1862 had brought to him, they were seldom refused.

The Prince of Solms was a Spiritualist whose only claim to notice was his rank. His letters to Mr. Home are filled with declarations of his belief, and of his desire to make the King of Hanover a sharer in his faith; but he invariably adds an entreaty that his correspondent will preserve the most absolute silence concerning both his conversion and his missionary zeal. Home was accustomed to such requests, and invariably showed the most self-sacrificing delicacy in respecting them. The name of the Prince of Solms, like those of Mr. Ruskin, Sir E. B. Lytton, Mr. Bright, and hundreds of others printed by me, finds no place in the "Incidents." It was reserved for the *Athenæum* critic of my former work to discover that "nearly everybody of importance whose curiosity led him to take part in any of Home's séances exposed himself to the risk of being quoted for advertising purposes." I leave it to my readers to judge of the truthfulness of such a statement.

If ever there lived a man who consistently refrained from advertising himself—who had celebrity forced on him without any efforts of his own—who was the sought and not the seeker—that man was Home.

That very journal, the *Athenæum*, which now represents Home as “advertising” the names of those present at séances, complained more justly, on the publication of the “Incidents” in 1863, that the preface and many of the narratives of séances were anonymous, and that “the witnesses brought by Mr. Home into the box are few.” I leave it to the *Athenæum* to reconcile its complaint made in 1863 with its assertions of 1888.

Writing from Hanover in October, 1862, the Prince of Solms presents, in such English as was at his command, a picture of the reception that had been accorded at Court to his narrative of the Ryde séances and his avowal of belief in Spiritualism :—

“My dear King heard everything I could tell him with more interest than I expected. . . . He was quite touched by the memorial of Mary Howitt over your dear wife’s life on earth. He was so happy that music was heard of the spiritual world, because his musical heart expects music in the future life. Also the Queen knows nearly all about my experiences, but is afraid it is not right to communicate with spirits.”

On November 16, 1862, the same correspondent writes to Mr. Home :—

“The opposition is no more so strong as before against all I dare tell. My relations, seeing that I am not the devil myself, begin to believe a little more. The Catholics are better believers than the Protestants, because they have in their history of saints so many spirit-manifestations. . . . My relations asked me not to speak about this, because I was so near to the royal family that people could say I am the medium in the King’s palace, and that the King reigns now by spirit-messages. You like my King, and I expect you will promise me to be silent for his sake. . . . So you must do me the favour not even to speak of me.—Believe me for ever, yours very truly,

GEORGE, PRINCE OF SOLMS.”

The year 1863 saw the publication of the first volume of the “Incidents.” The anonymous preface and concluding chapter were from the pen of Dr. Robert

Chambers, and Professor Nassau Senior also took great interest in the publication of the work, and introduced Mr. Home to his publishers, Messrs. Longmans & Co.

Nassau Senior had numerous sésances with Home ; and in 1868, the lady who had been the means of inducing him to investigate Spiritualism, his sister-in-law, Mrs. Adelaide Senior, deposed, in an affidavit sworn by her during the Lyon lawsuit :—

“I have been present when my brother-in-law, the late Nassau Senior, investigated the phenomena at his own house, and heard him declare ‘that all he could be sure of was that Mr. Home was true, and in no way responsible for what took place.’”

Some of the experiences that made Mrs. Senior a Spiritualist are narrated by her in my former work. A passage or two extracted from her many letters to Mr. Home may fitly supplement them. On August 16, 1862, Mrs. Senior writes :—

“Need I say how sincerely I sympathised with you when your sweet wife was removed ; but you have, I trust, the blessed feeling which you imparted to me that your dear one is ever with you. To me it has indeed been a blessing beyond price, and one for which I never can be thankful enough. May God bless and comfort you.”

A letter written sixteen years later contains the testimony of Mrs. Senior that the faith which had been given to her was too real and strong for time to shake it :—

“October 18, 1878.

“MY VERY DEAR FRIEND, . . . You ask me to write to you ‘if I could find time !’ Do you not think that I would always *make* time for that ? Nothing can ever make me forget your kindness at all times, and the great comfort and happiness you gave me in my deep distress. When I look back at my sésances with you in former years, all that I hear of now seem ‘as nothing in comparison. They really lifted up my soul into heaven.

God bless you for it all. . . . Your attached and grateful friend,  
ADELAIDE SENIOR."

I will join to Mrs. Senior's testimony an extract from a letter of another dear friend of Home's, whom she may have met at séances in 1861—Count Steinbock-Fermor, whose journey to London to investigate the phenomena is related in my former volume.

"There are so few veritable mediums, my very dear friend," writes Steinbock-Fermor to Home, "that for my part, I can only believe in *one*—and that one is yourself. And yet, I have seen mediums in plenty. (Et pourtant, j'ai vu beaucoup de médiums)."

A mass of letters of the years 1863 and 1864 lies before me, written by correspondents who have left no record of their séances with Home. The first I open is addressed to the Countess Antoinette Orsini, whose Florentine experiences of 1855 have already been described, and must have been written immediately after Mr. Home's expulsion from Rome, on the pretext of sorcery, in January, 1864.

"Please assure Mr. Home on my part," writes the Marquis de Salza, "that I attach no importance to either the expulsions or the excommunications of Rome, and that no one could be more enchanted to make his acquaintance."

The acquaintance in question was probably made at Nice, where the Countess Orsini had several séances with Home in the early part of 1864. Mrs. Milner Gibson was also at Nice in January and February of that year; and on Home's arrival from Italy, a number of new investigators of various nationalities were invited to meet him at her house.

"You occupy an important place in our thoughts since the memorable séance with Mrs. Milner Gibson, at which we had the good fortune to be present, and by which our spiritual beliefs were so materially strengthened," writes to Mr. Home a Russian gentleman named Batuckhine, for himself and his wife.

M

Another letter written during Home's Nice visit is dated February 26, 1864. Mons. and Madame de Veh were the joint writers:—

"You recollect perhaps," says Madame de Veh, "that Madame Imbert was promised a manifestation on the *third day*, when her mother was to communicate with her. It happened so, and Mme. Imbert is not to be recognised—so gay, so cheerful . . . My husband is so anxious to be a means of communication with the beings who surround us."

"Thank you, dearest master, for the new world you have opened to us," adds the husband in question.

"Whether I shall or shall not be a medium, I shall always be most thankful for the grace shown us. . . . Pastor Pilat said of you, 'Il s'est trouvé dans un rayon de la lumière divine.' God bless you.—Your most devoted  
GUSTAVE DE VEH."

Nearly five years later comes another letter, like the former, in English:—

"BIEBRICH, NASSAU, *September 7, 1868.*

"DEAR MR. HOME, . . . Do you recollect a couple named De Veh, from Russia, that you used to see at Nice in the company and at the séances of Mrs. Milner Gibson? If you do, you must also remember how much that same couple got attached to you, and not be astonished if they request the great favour of a few lines acquainting them that you are still at Homburg, whither they are sure to fly immediately, in order once more to shake hands with you. . . . Thousands of friendly greetings from your most sincerely attached,  
"GUSTAVE DE VEH."

A letter of February, 1864, from Mrs. Milner Gibson, written to Home just after he had left Nice for Paris, affords one more instance of the disdain with which he treated the fictions circulated concerning him:—

"Now, anent that article about you and Cazeneuve meeting at Alphonse Karr's," writes Mrs. Gibson. "Babouchkine came to me in a great excitement; he insisted that I should write to A. Karr to contradict it publicly in the papers. I did so, and received a most charming answer from him, in which he expressed himself ready to do it if I wished, but he said he would advise not—he thought it contemptible, and not to be taken up, so as to provoke fresh attacks; and as *this had been your opinion*, I gave way, but I think that Babouchkine blames me.

"Vulcano" (Marquis Vulcano) "came to see me yesterday, and spoke warmly of you."

Mrs. Milner Gibson's letters abound in evidences of her missionary zeal for Spiritualism. She relates how disappointed she was, on being presented to the Emperor of the French, that Napoleon III. did not enter on the subject; how, with Sir E. B. Lytton and the Marquis de St. Cyr, she attempted to obtain manifestations in the absence of Mr. Home (March, 1863); how the old King of Bavaria talked to her when they met, but was too deaf to hear any replies, and thus made it impossible for Mrs. Gibson to lead the way to a conversation on those manifestations with which his Majesty had made acquaintance while Mr. Home was a guest of the Emperor and Empress of the French in 1857.

The monarch in question would appear to have had that superstitious dread of the spirits which was common in some circles of society. In a letter written in 1878, Mr. Home thus narrates some of his experiences of 1857 with the King of Bavaria, while the French Court was returning from Fontainebleau to Paris:—

“I had the honour of being in a railway carriage with their Imperial Majesties and the King of Bavaria. We had scarcely left the station when the late Grand Duchess Stéphanie of Baden-Baden, who was seated near a little centre-table far from where I was standing, cried out, ‘Do come here, Mr. Home; this table is moving.’ The King stood near the doorway leading to the part of the carriage where the Prince Imperial was; the table was between him and the door leading to the other carriage, wherein were the ladies and gentlemen-in-waiting. I shall never forget the downright terror depicted on the man's face, as he would first look at that table moving without any visible aid, and then cast a hopeless and helplessly longing look at the door. At last the table rose in the air at least half a foot, no one being near it. This was too much; and the King, making for the door, vanished, and was no more visible till we reached Paris.

“A few evenings afterwards a ball was given at St. Cloud. No sooner had I made my appearance than the King came, and after shaking hands most warmly with me, remained at least ten minutes in earnest conversation with me, but most studiously ridiculing the topic of Spiritualism. It was most amusing to see the crowd of guests—all, of course, keeping at a respectful distance, but every nerve visibly strained in the hope to catch some fragment of what they imagined to be a most momentous conversation.

"The Duchess de Bassano came to me, her kind face beaming with smiles, and said, 'The King has just told me that he had done his best to be civil to you, for it would be a terrible thing to incur your displeasure in any way. "Supposing," said he, "Home should take it into his head to send some of his spirits to Munich, what could I do with them? I tell you, Duchess, that spirits who tell us when the priest is waiting to say mass,<sup>1</sup> or can float a table, as I and others saw it float, are not to be trifled with."'

"What a perfect God-send to a designing man or woman such a nature as this would be!

"NICE, *November 28, 1878.*"

The civility of the King of Bavaria to the spirits was not always imitated by those who shared his superstitious terror of them. In the case of a letter now before me, the writer returns her thanks for a séance that Mr. Home had given to some friends of hers, by the following singular exhibition of good manners and good taste:—

"NOTTING HILL, *May 23, 1868.*

"DEAR SIR,—I have to thank you for so kindly and readily complying with my friends' request to give them a sitting. . . .

"I cannot say I am a believer in Spiritualism being a legitimate thing. If I had an *unexpected manifestation* I should earnestly pray that He who has all power in heaven and in earth (not the Virgin) would help me to 'resist the devil.' I believe he would, in answer to the prayer of faith, be made to flee from me. Pardon me when I say I believe that *most* of the Spiritualists are unconscious agents of Satan, whose object is to divert the mind from God's daily and hourly providential help, and lead them to rely far too much on spiritual agency. . . .

"May I add one word on the worship of the Virgin? You are a Roman Catholic. How can great veneration be due to her when Jesus said, 'Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which hath sent me, the same is my brother, and sister, and *mother*'?"

"Please excuse my taking the liberty of writing my thoughts so freely and trespassing on your time.—Yours very truly,

"EMMA BLIGH.

"P.S.—I believe Satan appears to Spiritualists as an angel of light."

Strange that the writer should not have rebuked and protested against the desire of her friends for an introduction to the powers of evil through the kindness of Mr. Home! But she was not singular in her incon-

<sup>1</sup> See "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," p. 84.



sistency, as certain incidents narrated in the present chapter have already proved.

Some letters signed "George Macleay" show that Home held séances with the writer in the early summer of 1864 at 5, Seamore Place, Mayfair. On these occasions the circle once or twice included a Mr. Jermyn Cowell, whom I find writing to Mr. Home on July 12, 1864 :—

"I am looking forward with great pleasure to seeing you at 41, Gloucester Terrace, Hyde Park, on Saturday. My two friends whom you will meet there are Mr. E. Bowen, a master at Harrow School and a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Mr. R. V. Williams, a son of Judge Williams. They hardly know anything of Spiritualism, except by report and rumour, but are most desirous of obtaining some solid and connected information, such as you would, in the course of conversation, give them. Bowen is a great friend of Sidgwick's, and has been intensely interested at hearing from him about the spirit-hand he felt at Mr. Macleay's."

Eighteen months later, Mr. Cowell writes :—

"ST. LEONARDS ON SEA, *January 24, 1866.*

"I have been very much gratified at the receipt of your letter and your remembrance of me, and I rejoice to hear of your return to England. But I fear it will be long before I can have the pleasure of seeing you, as I am very ill. Last year I fell into a consumption, and had to leave London. . . .

"My interest in Spiritualism has continually increased, but the break-down of my health has interrupted all my researches. If ever I get better and am in London, I shall come and again bring myself to your remembrance. . . ."

Other letters of Mr. Cowell's speak of a promised visit of Home to St. Leonards; and then the series ceases suddenly—perhaps the writer had passed away.

The small portion of Home's correspondence that has been preserved—small relatively, though comprising thousands of letters in itself—forms little more than a fragmentary index to the history of his mission. Only himself could have added the book in its entirety to that index, have placed opposite each name the record of séances held and manifestations witnessed. I am about to give a few brief extracts from the letters of investigators whose experiences would seem to be

nowhere placed on record, but whose words furnish some indication of the convictions those experiences had impressed upon them.

The first is General Sir W. Topham. Writing from Noirmont, Weybridge, in February, 1866, to express his hope that the lecture on Spiritualism which Mr. Home had just delivered was only the inauguration of a series, the General adds :—

“It is a subject which one may pronounce to be as inexhaustible as religion itself, and you ought to establish a name as famous for the cause of human happiness as any other that has preceded you.<sup>1</sup>

“It would give Lady Mary Topham and me very great pleasure to see Miss Home and you at this little cottage for a few days, whenever you felt inclined for a breath of (what I think) the finest air in the country. I shall take my chance of finding you the first day that I am in town.—Very truly yours, W. TOPHAM.”

From The Grove, Pinner, another correspondent writes on January, 6, 1865 :—

“MY DEAR HOME,—Many thanks for your kind letter, which reached me a few days ago.<sup>2</sup> . . .

“The Doctor is looking better than I ever saw him, and so of the Miss Gullys and Miss Hays, who all talked of and about you. It must be cheering to you to be so loved by intelligent men and women. . . . We all join in prayer for your safe return.

“I shall now disencumber myself of business and devote the remainder of my life to spiritual investigation of the highest order. I find all my scientific knowledge falls into its right place, and I can make it of higher value in penetrating the Infinite Design of Things.

“I need not say that my house is yours whenever you can avail yourself of it. . . . Your loving friend, J. E. MAYALL.”

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<sup>1</sup> Home was so much above the ambition of leaving a name famous as that of the founder of a sect, that he never spoke of his belief unless interrogated ; and when he did speak, it was with such simplicity and candour that it would have been difficult to suspect him of seeking a convert. His mission was not one of words ; the theological science of Home was summed up in his acts. It was to prove his love to God and to be unwearied in doing good. This religion bears the name of Christ, and Home sought to give it no other. Of all “famous names,” this has established most firmly the belief in another life, and has been the greatest source of happiness to the human race. Strange to say, among those who call themselves Christians are some who dare not avow their belief in ministering spirits, for fear of appearing too simple and credulous.

<sup>2</sup> From America.

"I had hoped to make a contribution to the philosophy of Spiritualism—at any rate, done something to show scientific men and theologians the unreasonableness of their opposition. But I fear it is now too late." So writes mournfully, in May, 1864, a correspondent in very feeble health—the Rev. A. W. Hobson, one of the librarians of Cambridge University. Mr. Hobson had gone on a visit to London, and finding himself prevented by illness from accepting the invitation of a friend to meet Mr. Home, he wrote to the latter:—

"SIR,—Being too feeble to visit at other houses, I am deprived of any opportunity of witnessing for myself the marvels of which I hear. It would be a most unspeakable satisfaction to me, who am myself on the brink almost of another world, if I could see some of the phenomena which occur in your presence. . . . I am well aware how fully your time is occupied: I shall therefore not expect a reply, unless you can—contrary to my hopes—favour me with a visit."

Home, with his unfailing kindness, found time to call on the old clergyman, and to give him a séance—perhaps more than one. Mr. Hobson returned shortly afterwards to Cambridge, and aroused the interest of a friend, the great astronomer Adams, by relating to him his experiences. Just at this time, the Mr. Jermyn Cowell above mentioned was pressing Mr. Home to visit Cambridge, and on learning of this invitation Mr. Hobson writes, May 25, 1864:—

"MY DEAR MR. HOME,—If you *can* meet Professor Adams at my house any evening of your stay here, I do hope you will. He is an exceedingly pleasant, open, and amiable man, and as the first astronomer of the age, I think you would like to meet him, and I am sure he will be delighted to see you.

"May I beg, therefore, as a very great favour to myself, and possibly as the means of doing great good, that you will spend an evening with me on any day of your visit? I should not invite any one but Mr. Cowell and his friend Mr. Sidgwick, Professor Adams, and his wife; and we should be a very harmonious party. Do come, if you possibly can."

I am unable to say with certainty whether the visit to Cambridge was ever paid. Probably not, as Mr. Home's time was just then very fully occupied in London, where he was giving séances to Mr. Ruskin, Sir Charles Nicholson, Sir Daniel Cooper, and numerous other investigators.

Dr. Gully's letters, in the years 1864-68, are filled with remonstrances against the generosity with which Home sacrificed himself to the entreaties for séances of a host of Spiritualists and inquirers.

"I hope you are not having many séances," he writes in January, 1866. "You must upon no account, and for no persons whatever, have more than two in a week; it will destroy your health altogether, if you do. You must be firm in this, and, if you like, quote me, your medical friend, for it. In London air you should sit *less frequently* than in the country."

Again:—

"I would enjoin upon you not to sit often or long. Whether it takes something out of you directly or exhausts by previous excitement, there is loss to your nervous tissue; and I advise you not to sit with people long or frequently. In fact, my conscience went against the frequency of our sittings down here."

Home did not—could not—listen to these friendly warnings, seconded though they were by the excessive exhaustion that frequent séances entailed. He was unsparing in sacrificing his health and time to those who sought him; and asked nothing from them in return—not even that they would bear testimony to what they witnessed.

"My dear Home," writes one of the mute many (2, Endsleigh Street, February 16, 1866), "we *must* have your promised sitting *chez moi*. I know some friends whom I must convert to the REALITY" (doubly underlined) "of these phenomena.

"I was most delighted and satisfied with your lecture last night, and so was every one there whom I knew. My sister-in-law, who had her prejudices, found them

all melt away beneath the influence of your quiet, sincere, and therefore impressive exposition of your views and experiences. . . . Let us meet soon.—Yours very sincerely,  
A. SARGOOD."

The correspondents who, like Mr. Sargood, express their anxiety to convince a friend are numerous. I select a letter of the year 1864:—

"67, PORTSDOWN GARDENS, MAIDA HILL.

"MY DEAR MR. HOME,—Would you object to Mr. Frith, the R.A., dining with us next Wednesday? I have spoken to you about him before. He is very anxious and curious to *see*, and I am anxious that he shall do so. He is, of course, without any knowledge on the subject—simply *curious* to convince himself. . . .

"If you could shake his mind, I should be very glad.  
—Yours very truly, J. M. BELLEW."

My next quotation again takes me backward in point of time—to the spring of 1863 and the publication of the "Incidents:"—

"CHEETHAM HILL ROAD, MANCHESTER.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Your book was carefully read during my railway ride, and its appendix does certainly lash very heavily Sir D. Brewster. Of course you cannot ever expect his conversion in an honourable way, whatever his private views may be; and why Lord Brougham did not vindicate *you* I can't tell.

"I have named my interview to a friend of mine, a Mr. Williams, who is a merchant. He disbelieves such things as possible, and would be glad to go as far as London with me any time to witness such marvels. . . .

"Of course it" (Spiritualism) "is like most new things which are true—they are first flatly denied, then it is against religion, and then it ends by every one acknowledging that they have known it a truth long ago. Therefore, be calm, and care not for the world's sayings in this matter.

"Accept my kind regards, and believe me yours right truly,

"CHARLES BLACKBURN.

"P.S.—I see a letter in your book by Mr. Wason of Liverpool. I am intimate with him, and shall see him in a few days."

The most striking portions of Mr. Wason's testimony have been given in my former work (pp. 167, 168). I

supplement them now with extracts from one or two of his numerous letters to Mr. Home. They will show that the inquirer who in 1860 had "no theory or hypothesis to advance" concerning the phenomena investigated and attested by him, had, a few years later, become a Spiritualist in consequence of his subsequent séances with Mr. Home. I may mention that Mr. Wason was a well-known solicitor of Liverpool.

"WASON BUILDINGS, LIVERPOOL, *May 12, 1862.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am grieved indeed to hear such a sad account of the bodily health of your wife. At the same time, I heartily rejoice at the happy state of her spiritual health—looking forward with cheerfulness to the great change. . . . You, my dear friend, will have more than the ordinary share of intercourse assigned to mortals with the departed spirits of those nearest and dearest on earth.

"Spiritualism makes but slow progress here. We sadly want you to come here and satisfy unbelievers, by the evidence of their senses, that there are more things in the world than they in their philosophy dream of. . . . Most truly and sincerely yours,

"J. WASON."

"I trust, my dear friend," writes the same correspondent on November 4, 1864, "that you are now restored to health and strength, and in the full enjoyment of your great spiritual gifts, and of the happiness of affording evidence to the doubter and unbeliever of that life and immortality which Christ brought to light in the Gospel."

In 1866, I find Mr. Wason expressing to Mr. Home his hope "that we may have many séances together yet, and promote the good cause of Spiritualism, which I believe to be the new revelation to this unbelieving age."

In spite, however, of this Liverpool solicitor's enthusiastic declarations of his zeal for that which he constantly terms in his letters "the good cause," he did little to promote it by the publication of his numerous experiences with Mr. Home. The signed account of his first two séances, which is contained in the "Incidents," appears to have been the sum of the public testimony that he gave.

Of Baron Dirckinck-Holmfeld's experiences of Spiri-

tualism I know little, but that little is on record in the Baron's own words. He wrote as follows to Mr. B. Coleman in 1864; and the latter, by his permission, published the letter in the *Spiritual Magazine*:—

“THE ATHENÆUM, July 20, 1864.

“Having been present at a séance in the house of that clergyman to whom you alluded in the July number of the magazine, and who is justly celebrated for his wonderful gifts of genius and the broad view he takes about humanity and Christianity,<sup>1</sup> I wish to state that nobody present, and least of all our amiable host, entertained the least doubt about the spiritual cause of the astonishing facts we witnessed, or about the wonderful powers of Mr. D. D. Home as the medium through whom these manifestations were obtained. . . . I am, &c.,

C. DIRCKINCK-HOLMFELD, OF DENMARK.”

The occurrences that shattered in a few days the stubborn materialism of Dr. Elliotson have been narrated in my former work. I will only add here a few emphatic words of Dr. Elliotson's own, as quoted by Mr. S. C. Hall in 1864 (*Spiritual Magazine* for October of that year).

“You ask me,” wrote the great physiologist to the Rev. Dr. Knatchbull, “if I believe in Spiritualism. I believe all that you, as a Christian minister, believe—and perhaps more.”

Monsignor Talbot<sup>2</sup> was not the only Catholic friend who wrote to express sympathy with Mr. Home on learning of the attempt to murder him that had been made while the Lyon suit was in progress. The following note came from Lady Milford, who had frequently been present at his séances:—

“76, BROOK STREET.

“DEAR MR. HOME,—I have been shocked and grieved to read in the papers the horrid attempt that has been made upon your life. I trust you have not received any injury. . . . I sympathise with you in the anxiety you are going through just now. I wish you had never fallen into such treacherous hands. I wish still more that you would return to the one true friend who would never fail you in the hour of need—the Church.—Your sincere friend,

“A. MILFORD.”

<sup>1</sup> This *rara avis* remains unidentified.

<sup>2</sup> See “D. D. Home: His Life and Mission,” p. 269.

Lady Loftus Otway and her daughter, Mrs. Hughes, were among the friends of whom Mr. Home saw most in the years with which I am dealing, and up to the time of his quitting England in 1871. It was the former who presented to him a pair of foils for his *début* in *Hamlet*, when Mr. Home, in the spring of 1866, was hesitating between public readings and the stage, and had made a successful experiment in the direction of the latter by appearing at a provincial theatre in the character of Guy de Neuville in *Plot and Passion*.

The reviewer in *Piccadilly*, whom I have to thank for an unbiassed notice of my former work, gives some particulars of this *début* (at the Worcester Theatre) of Mr. Home, whom he would seem to have met at Malvern. I do not know who this gentleman is ; but the slight personal sketch he gives of Home is both interesting and correct, and I therefore reproduce it. It may especially be commended to the notice of those credulous Browniologists (happily very few) who have fancied that, though "Mr. Sludge the Medium" was bad poetry, it might be good fact :—

"Home used often to stay at Dr. Gully's delightful house, under the shadow of the Abbey Church, and went through a regular course of the waters. He was decidedly in his element at the head-quarters of the water-cure, for he was one of the most abstemious men I ever knew ; rarely drinking anything stronger than tea, and never letting even a cigarette pass his lips. The extent of his knowledge was amazing ; he seemed to know something of everything, and talked well on every subject under the sun. As a story-teller he was immensely amusing ; and in his Ulysses-like wanderings he had amassed a store of anecdotes more or less piquant. He was familiar with the salt of the earth, and I should say could have held his own with any of them, altogether apart from Spiritualism. His amazing memory was of the greatest assistance to him in his study of languages, and he had acquired a perfect knowledge of German and French. . . . I remember a rather remarkable séance at the Halls', at Kensington, and have a hazy recollection of Home increasing in stature before us ; but it is so long ago that I cannot trust myself to speak of it in detail."—*Piccadilly*, July 5, 1888.

It was on May 1, 1866, that Mr. Home appeared at the Worcester Theatre—"entirely unannounced,"



remarked the *Birmingham Daily Post* of May 3rd, and added that "the new actor was very warmly received."<sup>1</sup> A few days afterwards Home returned to London, and began the study of that most subtle of all the conceptions of Shakespeare—the character of Hamlet. It would seem that his appearance was even announced; for in sending him the foils Lady Otway writes:—"Pray do not forget to secure a box for me. You will have no friend, I am sure, more anxious than myself for your success."

It does not appear that *Hamlet* was ever played by Home. Probably he found that his health was unequal to the strain of so arduous a part, and so renounced his exhausting undertaking—and with it the stage.

Lady Otway never gave to the world the history of the séances that made her a Spiritualist, but she remained all her life one of the most attached friends of Home. "Remember," she writes to him in August, 1866, "that if at any time or in any way I can be of the least assistance, tell me so freely; and then I shall have to thank you for giving me the opportunity of having one of the few pleasures that still remain to me in this world—the gratification of thinking that I can be of use to those for whom I feel a sincere interest and regard. Always your sincere and attached friend,

"F. OTWAY."

Mrs. Hughes saw even more of the manifestations than did her mother, Lady Otway; and her numerous letters are filled with allusions to séances held or requested.

The circles at her house in Cumberland Street appear, from the letters of Mrs. Hughes, to have been usually

<sup>1</sup> "Mr. Home's first appearance was completely successful, and the more satisfactory inasmuch as it was not heralded by any of those eulogies which usually precede the *début* of a new actor. His impersonation was, from beginning to end, a most careful and artistic portrayal. . . . Mr. Home's acting was remarkable for careful study; and, as a whole, his impersonation may be taken as a truly striking performance. He has the advantage of a figure well suited to the stage, and a voice of the greatest flexibility."—*Worcester Journal*, May 4, 1866.

formed from among the following persons—herself, Captain Hughes, her family (“My daughters are very earnest believers,” she writes), Lady Otway, Sir William and Lady Gomm, and Mr. Westcar. The hostess was unquestionably a Spiritualist.

In the summer of 1866 the Spiritual Athenæum was opened, and Mr. Home accepted the post of secretary. A letter written by Mrs. Hughes at this time shows how zealously she was interesting herself in the success of the institution:—

*“August 13th.*

“DEAR FRIEND,—We warmly approve of the plan. My mother desires her love, and wishes to have a double subscription—that is, she wishes to subscribe £10 per annum and £10 more donation.

“For me, I must be booked for one subscription and £5 donation to the fund. I will do everything I can to get subscribers. I have sent the paper to Lady Gomm. . . . I am sending it to Lady Louisa, and after her I have many to send it to—amongst others, I will send it to Lady Poulett. I will not forget Lady Milford. . . . Believe me always your true friend,

G. HUGHES.”

For the benefit of a particular class of critic, it may be well to remark here that Mr. Home’s sole connection with the Athenæum was that of secretary. Subscriptions were received by the Executive Committee, and employed for the objects indicated in the following extract from the prospectus issued by the Council of the Society:—

“We ask you to give effect to our plan by agreeing to subscribe £5, 5s. annually, so long as it shall be satisfactory to you to do so, in order to establish the Spiritual Athenæum. No other responsibility of any kind will be incurred by subscribers. We wish to limit the number of subscribers to one hundred, but we believe that eighty will be sufficient to meet all requirements—such as rent of rooms, the supply of a library, and the expenses of a secretary.”

Those expenses were estimated at the modest sum of £150 per annum.

A letter from one of the Council—Dr. Gully—indicates the principal difficulty with which the Athenæum had to contend. “I hope that the institution is now on its legs, and likely to remain there,” he writes to

Mr. Home. "I am trying to look up subscribers, and I have no doubt that we shall keep it going—especially if your health holds out. *But the stupid people are so afraid of having their names mentioned in connection with it.*"

The news could have been no news to Home: he must have foreseen that numbers of those who were most profuse in declaring their faith in private would be timidly anxious to stipulate, before joining the Athenæum, that it should be a secret society so far as they were concerned. Others of his friends—Mrs. Hall, for instance—were desirous that the Athenæum should assume a semi-religious character, administer a Trinitarian test to its members, and banish from its reading-tables all but strictly orthodox publications. Others again insisted that the Athenæum ought to limit itself strictly to researches into the phenomena of Spiritualism, and found fault even with the hope expressed in the prospectus that the institution might aim at "checking the spread of materialism, upholding the truths and extending the influence of Christianity." Between these varieties of correspondents, and others still more difficult to deal with, the months during which Home held the secretaryship of the Spiritual Athenæum were by no means the least harassing of his life. All through the autumn and winter of 1866 his health continued to grow worse and worse; and had he persisted in remaining at his thankless and trying post, he would certainly have been lost ere long, not only to the Athenæum, but to Spiritualism itself. His history during the early months of 1867 was little more than a record of journeys made, under the advice of his physicians, from Brighton to Malvern, and from Hastings to Torquay, in the hope of some improvement in his health.

One of Home's most prized and constant correspondents during the years covered by this and the preceding chapter, and for many years afterwards, was Mrs. S. C. Hall. Her husband perhaps wrote as frequently

and lengthily, but Mrs. Hall's pleasant and interesting letters are of more value; and the many little details concerning English Spiritualism and Spiritualists which they contain have been of considerable assistance to me in my task. They furnish abundant evidence of the fact that, during the presence of Home in England, the interest of English society in Spiritualism grew as rapidly as, on his departure, it declined. The void that he left there was none to fill; and some measure of his value to the cause of Spiritualism may be obtained by contrasting the vigorous vitality of that cause in England twenty or thirty years ago with its decaying feebleness to-day. When Home was holding his séances, Spiritualism was the theme of universal discussion, and the English press paid it the compliment of almost daily attacks. To-day the word is hardly mentioned in English society; and from year's end to year's end scarcely a journal thinks it worth while to print one of the philippics which the press showered "thick as autumn leaves" in the days of Home.

"I have been greatly astonished lately at the *universality* of Spiritualism," writes Mrs. Hall to him in 1864; and her letters about that period contain ample proofs that interest in Spiritualism, and the desire to investigate it at the séances of Home, were indeed universal. Besides Ruskin and Bright, Lytton, Chambers, and the numerous other names already given, Mrs. Hall writes of many distinguished men and women, who, knowing that Mr. Home held frequent séances with the Halls, were pressing them for invitations.

"The Chief Baron and Lady Pollock," she writes on one occasion, "have sent to Mr. Hall to say how much they wish to meet you here. We shall hope to see you at five on Friday—no one to dinner but you, Mr. Durham, and Mrs. Senior. The Chief Baron and Lady Pollock are the only persons we have asked in the evening. How I wish the Chief should be convinced!"

Again (February, 1864):—"Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wigan are so interested in Spiritualism. I sat next Dr. Doran at dinner at Mr. Warde's yesterday—Mr. Dallas of the *Times* opposite. Something

was said by Mr. Dallas about spirits and supernatural things ; and I said to Dr. Doran, 'Of course you are not a believer in Spiritualism ?'

"Dr. D.—'Indeed I am,—I fully believe that all around us is peopled by spirits.'

"Myself.—'Have you ever seen any manifestations?'

"Dr. D.—'No ; but there is nothing I more earnestly desire, and should be so glad if you could help me to see, where I should not doubt the honesty of the house.'

"We talked on, and I felt how much in earnest he was—and he could do the cause such service. He is anxious to know you—a pleasure I promised him.

"Then Mr. Dallas said across the table, 'Dr. Elliotson is attending me—do you know he is almost a believer in Spiritualism?'—'Almost,' I repeated ; 'he was altogether so when I saw him at Dieppe,'"

"Dr. Elliotson was at Mrs. Milner Gibson's on Monday night," says another of Mrs. Hall's letters, "full of Spiritualism and its hopes—speaking of it triumphantly and bravely."

Lord Lansdowne, Captain Drayson, Mr. Hare, Mayor of Bristol, Lady Combermere, the Rev. Dr. Irons, Mr. Colley Grattan, M.P., General Ramsay—such are a few of the remaining names mentioned by Mrs. Hall in letters of this period, in connection with séances requested from Mr. Home or actually held by him.

## CHAPTER VII.

*THE HOME OF FICTION.*

MODERN journalism, like the Nature of the empirical old axiom, "abhors a vacuum;" and as the truths stranger than fiction of Home's life were left in great part untold by those who ought to have borne witness to them, the pens of sensational journalists were always ready to construct fables to fill the void. Circumstantial accounts of séances that had never been held were given by persons who knew nothing of Home but his name, and the most extraordinary stories were told of him, and vouched to be true, by romancers who were well aware that both Truth and the man whom they calumniated in her name were entire strangers to them.

These contributions to the biography of a Home who never existed were perhaps more abundant in the French press than in any other; but for uncontrolled license of imagination American journalists have occasionally surpassed the most impudent romancer who ever exercised his inventiveness for the benefit of the press and public of Paris. The fictitious anecdotes of Home contributed to a New York paper were, however, as dull as they were extravagant; while the Gallic Munchausen had at least the merit of occasionally amusing his readers. One of his most diverting flights of fancy was called forth by the false telegram announcing the sudden death of Mr. Home, which went the round of the world's press in 1876. *L'Événement* of Paris profited by the receipt of this news to publish the following veracious anecdote. I need only preface it with the remark that, so far from having been born at Baltimore, Home never was in that city in his life:—

"Home, as every one knows, was born in Baltimore. Nothing could be more singular than the account he used to give of his initiation into Spiritualism. He once told the story to myself, and I have already had occasion to speak of it. Here it is:—

"‘One day,’ said Home, ‘whilst I was in Baltimore, I received a visit from one of my best friends, who had recently lost his wife. He told me, with evident terror, that he was haunted every night by the shade of the defunct; and fearing any longer to sleep alone, he had come to beg me to pass the following night with him.

"‘I agreed to do so. We sat up till about eleven o’clock chatting over one thing and another, without anything happening. Suddenly my friend rose, and pointed with his finger to a kind of white vapour that hung wavering at the foot of the bed. Keeping my presence of mind, I walked straight up to the phantom and ordered it to withdraw. It obeyed, and vanished.

"‘We were just beginning to recover from our agitation, when my friend gave a loud shriek. ‘Look!—look at my cat!’ he gasped out. ‘*It has taken the eyes of my wife!*’

"‘It was true! Straight up to the cat I walked, and ordered the wandering soul to leave the body of that animal. On the instant the cat fell dead.

"‘I was about to turn round, when I heard in a corner of the room a plaintive voice—that of the dead woman—pronounce these words distinctly: ‘Have pity on me—have pity on me!’

"‘It was the parrot that spoke. I advanced towards him; and on my emphatically adjuring the spirit to have done with its juggleries, down fell the bird as dead as the cat.

"‘The rest of the night passed tranquilly. As for me, I had acquired a knowledge of my power over the invisible world. I was a medium! I believed!’

"It was with a tone of the utmost conviction," adds the gifted Ananias of *L'Événement*, "that Daniel Douglas Home used to retail to people this astonishing story. Last year he asserted that he had evoked more than fifteen thousand spirits since the date of its occurrence."

The above is perhaps the most grotesquely absurd story that even a French journalist ever invented concerning Home.

The Home of reality was so far from losing the favour of the Empress of the French by his séances, that her Majesty graciously offered to charge herself with the education of his young sister, who was placed by the Empress in the Convent of the Sacred Heart, and remained there for seven or eight years. As for Mr. Home's séances at the French Court, those of 1857 and

1858 were succeeded by those which he held at the Tuileries in January, 1863; and those of 1863 by those of 1864 and 1865. It was far otherwise with the Home of fiction. "It will be remembered," says the contributor of the cat-and-parrot story to *L'Événement*, "that at one of the séances at the Tuileries, the ex-Empress was so frightened by feeling invisible hands tying knots in her handkerchief, that the next day Home was requested to leave Paris."

This imaginary Home, the wizard who startled the Empress, must have been sent away from Paris at least a score of times—by the press there. One day the Emperor had banished him, never to return. The next day that story was contradicted. Home was in prison on unknown charges; the veracious chronicler had seen and spoken with him in his cell—Home being at the moment actually in Rome.<sup>1</sup> Another time—but the story can speak for itself:—

"Home inhabited a hotel, Place Vendôme, opposite the Column. His believers, weary of flying tables, entreated him to give some more signal proof of his power. In reply to their prayers, the sorcerer announced that he would order his spirits to remove the Vendôme Column to the Bois de Boulogne.

"The police hastened to forewarn the Emperor of Home's design. Next day the famous medium was exiled from the capital."

To the wizard who could plan the abduction of the Vendôme Column, the opening of a lock without a key was naturally an easy matter. It was by a feat of the kind, it seems, that Home conquered the incredulity and won the favour of the Emperor Alexander II. *Le Gaulois* of April 6, 1876, was responsible for the publication of the little romance:—

"One day," said that newspaper, "Home was summoned to the palace and presented to the Emperor, who, surrounded by several persons of the Court, was waiting for him in an apartment where a large safe had been placed.

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<sup>1</sup> See "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," pp. 106, 107.



"This safe had its history. The locksmith who constructed it had wagered a considerable sum that no one would be able to open it, and he had gained his bet; none of his fellow-locksmiths having been able to discover the contrivance of the lock.

"Home was ignorant of these circumstances. He made several curious experiments before the Czar, who suddenly said to him:— 'You see this safe? Well, if you can succeed in opening it without touching it, I will believe in the spirits.'

"The medium hesitated an instant, for he had never tried any experiments of this kind. However, confident in his power, he made no reply, but seated himself at some distance from the safe, and evoked his familiar spirits.

"A quarter of an hour passed. Suddenly a succession of cracking sounds were heard in the lock of the safe, and presently it opened."

In another imaginary episode of the life of Home, the evoker of familiar spirits, the gratification of an Imperial wish was attended with disagreeable results, both to the monarch and the medium. Who the crowned head in question was, the author of this fable did not say, but contented himself with telling his tale as follows:—

"It had been arranged that Home should evoke that evening the spirit of the father of the sovereign. By the direction of Home, the Emperor selected twelve of his most trusted counsellors; and the whole party assembled in the semi-darkness of a vast apartment of the palace, and seated themselves around a table. On his left the Emperor had Home; on his right an empty chair. All at once a heavy and measured tread was heard to cross the floor.

"The Emperor's look sought to pierce the gloom. 'I see nothing,' he said to the wizard.

"'Sire,' said Home, 'turn to the seat on your right.'

"What happened? No one can say. All that is known is that a frenzy of terror seized the Emperor, who started from his seat and cried for lights. As for Home, he received an order to quit the country within twenty-four hours."

The author of the fable evidently had one of the most valuable qualities that a romancer can possess, as it is also one of the rarest—he knew just where to leave off.

The magician who evoked spirits at his pleasure and possessed unlimited command over them was essentially a product of French fancy, which insisted on attributing to Home the power of evoking spirits, and

was deaf to his emphatic repudiation of that power. I know of only one French writer who has employed his imagination to represent Home under another aspect. In one of the novels of Houssaye, Home is introduced by name, and depicted as being haunted by demons and afraid of them. Home never even took the trouble of acquainting himself with the details of his counterfeit presentment by reading the work, although he must have been a little astonished that Houssaye, to whom he had shown kindness, should have repaid it by handing him over to Satan.

Besides the merely foolish or ludicrous fictions which appeared in the press concerning Home, there were occasionally published falsehoods more discreditable to their authors. A specimen, which had the further demerit of being anonymous, was given to the world in 1876 by some person who supposed Mr. Home to have passed out of it:—

“Every one knows,” said *L'Italie* of April 12, 1876, “that the celebrated spiritualist Douglas Home has just died in a railway carriage between Berlin and Cologne. The correspondent of a Paris journal takes advantage of this occasion to relate a very curious anecdote:—

“Having been often present at his séances, and having always shown my incredulity concerning the so-called phenomena exhibited before me, I was one morning awakened by Douglas Home in person. After chatting on one thing and another, Douglas suddenly rose, and looking at me fixedly, said, ‘So you won’t believe in spirits and Spiritualism? And supposing I were to give you here, in your own house, an irrefutable proof, would you confess yourself vanquished and convinced?’ I replied to Home that I was ready to accept his challenge.

“‘Very well! You are quite certain, I suppose, that there are no machines in your house, nor anything prepared beforehand. You must give me one of your hands and hold my other hand under this round table. Think, then, of some one who is dead, and you will feel his icy hand press our two hands clasped under the table.’

“It was broad daylight; we were, I repeat, in my own house, and I was certain there could exist no hidden contrivance; so I consented. Hardly had I taken Home’s hand in mine under the round table, when, to my great surprise, I felt icy cold fingers pass along the back of my hand. I confess that this sensation gave me a sort of shiver. I looked at Home, who seemed to be in a trance. I let

go his hand ; and a profound silence ensued for some seconds. Recovering from my emotion, I began trying to conjecture how this effect could have been produced. I was awakened from my reverie by a loud laugh from Home, who had drawn back his sleeve, and was showing me a little bladder containing sulphuret of carbon, highly rectified to prevent all smell, which he had just burst by a muscular effort of the fore-arm. This liquid, the rapid evaporation of which causes a sensation of extreme cold, had, in spreading itself over the back of my hand, caused the strange illusion I have just narrated.

“Douglas Home made me avow that I had been very near believing in the supernatural ; and I have ever since comprehended what important results he might obtain by similar means.”

“A friend of mine,” says Home in a letter to America, “wrote to *L'Italie* to ask from what Paris journal this lie was taken. They ‘regret not to know!’ Is it not shameful thus to malign one whom they think dead?”

One of the most circumstantial accounts ever written of a séance that never was held appeared in the year 1857 in the *Court Journal*. Mr. Home had unexpectedly left Paris for America, and the thousand tongues of rumour were busily circulating a thousand falsehoods to account for his departure. The truth was, that he had gone to bring to France a young sister, whom the Empress had graciously offered to take under her protection. He left Paris towards the end of March, 1857, and on returning in May of the same year, was immediately summoned to Fontainebleau, to hold séances there with the Emperor, the Empress, and the King of Bavaria. During the few weeks of his absence, a story was concocted in Paris of an imaginary evocation of Socrates, Alcibiades, and Frederick the Great ; and a correspondent of the *Court Journal* furnished it to the readers of that newspaper, with the following amusingly-impudent voucher:—

“Your readers may be assured of the truth of what we are about to relate, and of the adventure being the whole and sole cause of the abrupt departure of the discomfited wizard.”

According to this worthy fabulist—“A grand séance

had been prepared for Mr. Home at the house of one of the principal officials about the Court, who had witnessed the divers experiments made at the Tuileries, and which, although failing to convince him entirely, had yet not left him wholly incredulous."

Among the sitters invited to this imaginary séance by the romancer of the *Court Journal* were Marshal Baraguay d'Hilliers, Nadaud the composer, and Eugène Guinot; but Home insisted, says that romancer, on the exclusion of such notorious sceptics and scoffers, and the disappointed trio determined to have their revenge. Home had promised to evoke the dead that night and render them visible (Home, who never evoked a spirit in his life, nor claimed to have the power of doing so!). The company having assembled, all the lights but one were extinguished; and, at the suggestion of a voice in the corner of the room, the wizard raised his arm and summoned Socrates to appear. The door opened:—

"A figure enveloped in a kind of floating drapery, something like a winding-sheet, advanced with noiseless tread over the carpet, and stood before the conjuror. The white and flowing beard, the bald head, and crushed nose were unmistakable—Socrates stood, as in life, in the very midst of that gay and frivolous circle, evoked from his slumber of centuries to furnish sport for a Parisian *salon*. The awe and terror of the company was at its highest, and the figure glided back in silence while yet the effect produced was at its culminating point."

The non-existent evoker of this imaginary phantom straightway "yielded to the entreaties of the same voice which had spoken before, and which now implored the evocation of Frederick the Great." Frederick presented himself as promptly as Socrates in response to the summons; but, once back on earth, seemed to think it preferable to the quarters he had just quitted, and to wish to stay. In vain, according to the *Court Journal*, did his evocator command him to withdraw:—

"'Enough, enough! begone! depart!' said he, in a hoarse whisper, as the eyes of the figure glared upon him with a fierce and menacing expression. 'Begone,

I say!’ repeated he in a hollow tone, as the figure still stood motionless, in spite of the command.”

Go the phantom would not; and at last the magician, for all his simplicity, began to perceive that he was not dealing with a ghost.

“Rousing himself by an effort which, considering the circumstances in which he was placed, may be regarded as sublime, he suddenly exclaimed, ‘I have been made the dupe of some mystification,’ and stepped close to the figure, which had still retained its menacing attitude until that moment. A loud and uncontrollable laugh burst from its lips, and it exclaimed, ‘What! don’t you know me? I am Nadaud, and here is my friend Socrates, otherwise Marshal Baraguay d’Hilliers, ready to appear again whenever you choose; and close at hand is my comrade, Eugène Guinot in life and Alcibiades in death, waiting to be summoned after me, as he would most assuredly have been, had I been able to follow up the joke.’”

“I can only say,” wrote Mr. Home, in reprinting this fable in his first volume of “Incidents,” “that the whole of the statements, names, dates, circumstances, and persons are false from beginning to end.”

The imaginary Home whom the correspondent of the *Court Journal* saw “with his mind’s eye” evoking Socrates and Frederick the Great, had the audacity to attempt another and even more public appearance in France. At Lyons, in 1858, this *döppelgänger* sent out bills announcing “a *soirée américaine* by Mr. Home, who has had the honour to make his experiments before his Majesty the Emperor.” But the Lyons experiments never came off. It was discovered that the actual Home was then in Naples, and the impostor fled.

I might fill pages with a mere summary of stories resembling that quoted from *L’Italie*. For instance, in a work professedly serious, by a writer of this type, the French public were informed, not long after Home passed from earth, that the phenomena witnessed at the Tuileries had been produced with the help of a kind of telescopic fishing-rod, which he carried concealed in his sleeve and slipped out during the séance. The audacity of this fiction is hardly excused by the vident ignorance of its author that the séances with

the Emperor and Empress took place in the light, and that, during a séance, Mr. Home's hands rested on the table, like those of the other sitters. Had he been aware of these facts, he would doubtless have contrived some story a little more *vraisemblable*, and would scarcely have gone on to inform his readers that the spirit-hands which appeared at séances were the feet of Home. "Nothing was easier," says this veracious Frenchman, "than for him to slip off his boots in the dark, and to make his feet pass for the hands of a spirit." It seems hardly credible that this nonsense should have been copied and gravely commented on by a leading Paris newspaper, but such was the case. I need hardly add that its author could never have been present at those Imperial séances of which he writes, the circles at the Tuileries having been formed of persons of a very different grade in society, and, as a rule, of the same sitters.

Even the boot and fishing-rod theory is, however, outdone in absurdity by a story contributed, in the year 1876, to a Cincinnati newspaper by its English correspondent. This person gravely informed his readers that Mr. Home had been found on a house-top at Florence, setting up wires and affixing to them sponges prepared with phosphorus. Why the house-top should have been chosen, and for what purpose the sponges were prepared, were problems which the narrator left it to the credulity of his readers to solve. He contented himself with declaring that the story was not his, but that of Mr. Robert Browning—a statement which I can only conclude to be as apocryphal as the house-top, sponges, and wires themselves.

The circumstantial falsehoods and wild fictions which appeared from time to time in the press concerning Home have a fitting pendant in the extraordinary letters addressed to him by correspondents who had probably taken their idea of him from the romances of newspaper writers. People of every country and condition assailed him with the most impossible re-

quests and the most astounding queries. Again and again he was entreated to furnish talismans that would protect against accident or disease, to discover buried treasure, to make a correspondent happy with a supply of the *elixir vitæ*. Hundreds of persons, especially in France, wrote to beg that he would evoke the spirit of some lost relative or friend, and command it to present itself forthwith to the writer—"in such a manner," stipulates one French correspondent of this class, "that I may distinctly see the features of the person whom I loved so much, and have had the misfortune to lose."

Mr. Home could only reply to such suppliants that he fully understood and deeply sympathised with the feelings which prompted their requests, but that the evocation of those who had passed from earth was beyond his power, for spirits came to him at their will, and not at his.

From Lexington Avenue, New York, a Mrs. Amanda H—— writes to declare that it had been *spiritually* commanded to her, on September 14, 1866, that she should warn Mr. Home to cease dealing with familiar spirits. Correspondents of this type were frequent; but the lady in question seems to have been unique in the assertion that the injunction to cease dealing with spirits was given through her to Home by familiar spirits of her own.

It was by no means Home's custom to preserve letters from persons unknown to him which were remarkable only for their absurdity, and the few which have escaped destruction have been saved by accident. An extract or two from these accidental survivals of reams of folly will convey some idea of the persecution to which the post was constantly subjecting Home.

The first letter I take up (dated from Ashford, Kent, Sept. 8, 1866) is remarkable for the fact that the writer—a lady—has neither questions to put, to which an immediate answer is requested, nor spiritual favours to entreat, which it would be unpardonable of the spirits

to refuse. She has, however, much deeply-meditated wisdom to impart to Mr. Home, as follows:—

“MY DEAR SIR,—Will you oblige me by turning to the xvi. chapter of Revelations, the 17th and following verses? I humbly think that the seventh vial here mentioned is now being poured out, and that Spiritualism is meant. . . . In prophetic language, ‘great earthquakes’ signify, as is generally admitted, great changes and revolutions; and this of Spiritualism is such as men never felt or experienced before, for it will be the cause of the utter destruction of the Church of Rome (Babylon), and the entire extirpation of idolatry. To me, who interpret the pouring out of the seventh vial in this way, Spiritualism becomes a very solemn thing. . . .

“You may, if you please, add my name to the list of members of the ‘Spiritual Athenæum.’ *I object to the name* which has been selected for the society. I should much like that some name should be selected which would show that we wish to place Spiritualism entirely on a Christian basis. The name ‘Athenæum’ does not show this; it would rather show the contrary, inasmuch as it was a place where pagan philosophers resorted in ancient Athens.”

Writing from Brunnow, in Moravia, a modest-minded correspondent tells Home:—

“While the universe resounds with your name, I am thanking Heaven that I also have had odic phenomena such as few persons can equal. I have obtained movements of tables, writing, the sight of spirits, the dispatch of objects from distant planets through the air (!), long conversations, &c.

“However, I wish to be enlightened on the following points:—

“The means of obtaining direct writing at will. I had the phenomenon three months ago of seeing you in vision, and you gave me certain counsel. What do you advise me now in your normal state of reflection? I will wait a fortnight to know, and during that time you may consult with your spirit-friends; only, I beg that it may be done with the veneration due to my protecting spirits. I send you some of my hair, in order to place you *en rapport* with them.

“Your phenomena of odic hands and the movements of tables, &c., have been much talked of. Similar things have happened to me; only, I think that for the plastic crystallisation I require a still greater concentration of odic fluid than I possess. What is your opinion?

“Have you succeeded in deciphering any hieroglyphics?”

The above are hardly the moiety of the questions with which this pitiless stranger pelts Home. By how



many similar postal attacks he was yearly harassed only himself could say.

An American correspondent insists on his informing her what has become of "a magnificent emblematic drawing which I sent to Napoleon III., together with a document of explanation and a personal poem. After waiting some months without receiving a reply," continues the disappointed artist and poet, "I wrote a second time, but with no better success. Having read of your personal acquaintance with the Emperor, together with your highly gifted powers, I turn to you, sir, with hope, and almost assurance, of aid and a solution of the mystery. Have the drawing and the documents ever reached the Emperor? If not, where are they?

"I should be pleased to read you the poem for the Emperor on your coming to New York."

A letter from Madrid is noticeable for the unfortunate results of a considerate desire on the part of the writer to render his requests intelligible to Home by expressing them in English:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—It is necessary for ours meetings here that some notable fact come to invigorate the fainting beliefs of the partys, and all my friends unanimously, by my intercourse, request from you this fact, if it is possible.

"In our meetings during two winters nothing convincing and palpably has been obtained. Have you not perhaps the power of sending us some evident manifestation, or convincing communication, on an hour and day appointed? If it may be, I humbly request from you to say to my the hour and day in which we are to meet in expectancy of your communication."

"For some time past," writes a correspondent of 1860, "I have experienced the greatest desire to become a medium. I do not know if there is any possibility of this, but I have, as it were, a presentiment in the affirmative. Will you please tell me briefly what the sensations of mediumship are?"

An instructive example of the manner in which certain journalists deal with their readers is afforded by the following extract from the letter of an American correspondent. The absurd statements to which

Home's attention was drawn were, of course, as his correspondent sensibly surmised, "evolved from the lively imagination" of some one of those literary coiners who profit by the abundant credulity of the public to pass off fictions as facts:—

"I have seen an account, which may have been exaggerated, of an interview between yourself, Professor Crookes, the scientist, Lord Lytton, the novelist, and Professor Brewster, of the Edinburgh University. According to this published account, you exhibited to them your power of levitation, not only in being carried up in the air to the ceiling of the room, but also in being taken through an open window, out to a seat on an adjoining lawn.

"Lord Lytton, a Spiritualist in his belief, explained the demonstration as being proof that you were aided by spirits.

"Professor Brewster gave two explanations: the first, that he regarded it as supernatural; the second, subsequently, that it was the trick of a charlatan.

"Professor Crookes attributed it solely to your excessive amount of what he was pleased to term Psychic Force, and which term he explained by stating that gravitation was simply the attraction existing between oppositely electrified bodies—that the centre of the earth was a great reservoir of, say, positive electricity, and that all matter on the earth was charged with, say, negative electricity; hence the attraction. But that you possessed the power of generating within yourself the same kind of electricity which the earth possessed at its centre—say, positive—to the point where you would be similarly electrified; and that, as a necessary natural conclusion, repulsion would result, and thus you would be sent farther from the centre of the earth; or, as the eye would see it, were raised from the earth.

"I do not know how much of this was evolved from the lively imagination of a magazine writer. Does any published English book contain the facts in regard to what took place?"

To which question Mr. Home doubtless replied that the pretended meeting had never occurred, and that the whole figment seemed to have been suggested by that remarkable instance of levitation which occurred in the presence of Lords Adare and Lindsay, and of Captain Wynne. (See "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," chap. ix.)

The above correspondent, in quoting an absurd story, did so, as will be seen, with the sensible object of learning from Home on what facts (if any) the fiction

was based. I turn now to two letters from an American of a very different type. Home received the first early in 1876, about the time when he announced his intention of publishing a protest against the abuses which usurped the name of Spiritualism:—

“ALBANY, N.Y., *January 24, 1876.*

“SIR,—Though I have never had the pleasure of meeting you, I am induced by a letter from Dr. Bloede to ask a few questions concerning Mme. —.” After asking these questions, the writer proceeds:—“Few persons have written more (in the newspapers) than I have for the advancement of our sublime cause. I had the — sisters in my family for a number of weeks; and both Mrs. Ditson and myself were overwhelmed with gratitude to the good spirits who filled our habitation with light, though in dark séances.

“Your ‘Incidents of My Life,’ vol. i., has ever been in my library as one of my most valuable and interesting works, and I think I have done a great deal of good with it. Hard times have prevented me from procuring your second volume, though I am called rich.

“Spiritualism in America is, no doubt, advancing with giant steps; but there is so much rascality in high places, there are indeed here so few *gentlemen*, in the European sense of the term, that one hardly knows where to look for agreeable society.”

The vulgar self-sufficiency of this foolish letter was by no means calculated to impress Mr. Home favourably, but, as his correspondent mentioned the name of a person known to him (Dr. Bloede), he briefly acknowledged the communication, and thought no more of it. In the meantime, its author would seem to have been meditating over Home’s published announcement of the work on which he was engaged. His deep solicitude for “the good spirits who filled our habitation with light, though in dark séances,” presently found expression in a long remonstrance against the exposure of abuses. Mr. Home printed this extraordinary letter in “Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism,” with the simple remark that the writer was of mature years and arrogated to himself the title of “a leading American Spiritualist.” I quote a few of the most impressive passages:—

“ALBANY, *March 10, 1876.*

“ASTONISHMENT! SURPRISE! MARVEL! Have the heavens fallen upon you, Mr. Home, and crushed out your humanity? . . .

"You may be 'taking the bull by the horns,' but you are certainly entering the field, as it were, of the deadly rattlesnake, that warns you, and does not strike without a warning. . . . I cannot think of a more ungracious, ill-repaying task than that of exposing the faults of others. 'I will repay,' says the Lord, and can you not trust to Him? Every 'exposure,' *however true and well-sustained it may be*, will only be a thorn—a sharp, a cruel thorn—in your future path. Your alliance with the Russian nobility, your high social position in England, will not shield you. You will fall like Lucifer, and, if not with a bullet through your head, I believe it will be with shame and sorrow in your heart. . . .

"You will doubtless say that you only promulgate the *truth*. Is the truth even to be spoken at all times? *What is truth to-day may not be so to-morrow*. A man or a woman may be immoral this year, and as pure as an angel the next. . . .

"Now, Mr. Home, I cannot but ask God to forgive you, for 'you know not what you do.' The *interior* light of which Christ spoke, I am morally certain you do not possess; and I beg of you, with all the earnestness I can command, with much admiration of the good you have done as a wonderful medium, to seek that light. Moses, Plato, Jesus, Apollonius, Pythagoras, Porphyrius, and in more modern times, Bacon, Flood, Cagliostro, the Fakirs of India, had this light; and the Fakirs have it now. . . . G. L. DITSON."

It is painful to think that such persons as the writer of this letter should have called themselves Spiritualists.

Unsatisfied with his lengthy pleading in behalf of the "spirits" of dark séances, Mr. Ditson added to his letter a postscript of two closely-written pages.

"You say you are a great invalid," this interesting appendix began. "A person told me that he knew a man still paralysed, who came by his misfortune in this way. One day he had been abusing unmercifully a child left to his care by a deceased brother; and as the man, or brute, passed out of the room, the deceased brother met him in the hall (so he says), and with a mighty blow felled him to the earth. He arose paralysed, and still sits thus in his chair. 'Whom the gods wish to destroy,' &c. God will not, our good, loving God, will not help you to publish your book."

Comment on this extraordinary apologue is impossible. It is pleasant to remember that, in spite of Mr. Ditson and others of his class, "Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism" appeared in due course, and rendered benefits to the cause which were acknowledged by sensible men and true Spiritualists the world over.

The leading articles which appeared in some London daily journals when Mr. Home passed from earth are well worthy of notice in this chapter. I have shown in my former work that the *Daily News* of June 24, 1886, gave a pseudo-narrative of Mr. Home's adoption by Mrs. Lyon, which was contradicted by the less garbled account of the facts which *the same journal* had published in May, 1868, on the delivery of the Vice-Chancellor's judgment.

The remainder of the *Daily News* leader accorded fittingly with its writer's version of facts that were on record in the Court of Chancery. It was a tissue of abuse directed against a man of whom the writer knew so little that he could not even give his name correctly. While Home was still on earth this obscure assailant of Spiritualism would hardly have ventured on his tirade; for such persons have some respect for the law of libel.

It is a high honour to be calumniated by the *Times*; and in a leading article of June 24, 1886, that honour was accorded to Mr. "Douglas" Home. The vocabulary of the *Times* writer was not so abusive as that of his brother of the *Daily News*; but this negative merit is the only one that can be discerned in his production. I have dealt in my former volume with the misstatements of the *Times* writer concerning the Lyon suit, and need not expose their incorrectness a second time. Some other passages of his article, which I then passed by as unworthy of serious notice, may fitly be quoted in such a chapter as the present.

"It is something like twenty years," said the fabulist of the *Times*, "since the deceased came to England professing to be endowed with a variety of 'spiritual' gifts, and to be able, through their means, to hold intercourse with the spirits of deceased persons. At that time the imposture of which such pretensions formed part was popular among fashionable people; and the *séances* of mediums were continually held at great houses, *partly, perhaps, as a mere pastime*" (Home consenting to hold *séances* as a *pastime*!), "and, no doubt, partly from the inability of those who were present at them to discern their true character. In those days, tricks which are easily within the capacity of any conjuror at a country fair were deliberately exhibited before audiences of supposed enlightenment, and were

exhibited, not as examples of dexterity, but as veritable miracles, or as the results of communications from the inhabitants of other worlds. Mr. Home early made himself conspicuous as an adept in the not very difficult art in which he was engaged, and he became quite a personage in some of the most distinguished circles in London."

If the *élite* of English society were as conspicuous for imbecility as this *Times* writer asserts, the tribe of *soi-disant* mediums whose impostures Mr. Home exposed in "The Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism" ought surely to have become, one and all, "quite personages in some of the most distinguished circles in London." Mr. Home, moreover, was at least as much of a personage at the Courts of Russia, France, and Germany as in England. The *Times* writer would no doubt account for this fact by applying to St. Petersburg and Paris his theories concerning the higher society of London. Possibly his views may find acceptance with those Englishmen (if any still survive) who hold the belief that Providence has reserved the best of human intelligence for distribution among the writers of the *Times*.

"Lor', sirs, it's easy enough!" replied the old lady in America who was asked for her explanation of the phenomena. "He only rubs himself all over with a gold pencil first." Her simple, satisfactory theory compares favourably in point of intelligence and intelligibility with much that the press has published concerning Home.

Perhaps the most impudent of all the fictions ever offered to a credulous public as "facts" from Home's history appeared in the pages of an American publication, called the *Popular Science Monthly*, in April, 1889. It seems hardly credible that any writer should have had the audacity to represent exposures of trickery which Mr. Home published in "Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism" as *confessions made by himself*. Yet such was the case.

On page 405 of the American edition of that work, in a chapter headed "Trickery and its Exposure," Mr.

Home copied from an American newspaper the confession of a detected trickster, who had been caught in the act of imposture while giving "séances" at Rochester, N.Y. In accordance with the rule observed by him throughout "Lights and Shadows," Mr. Home did not print the name of this interesting penitent, which is represented only by its initial "J——." Part of "J——'s" confession ran :—

"The first séance I held after it became known to the Rochester people that I was a medium, a gentleman from Chicago recognised his daughter Lizzie in me after I had covered my small moustache with a flesh-coloured cloth, and reduced the size of my face with a shawl I had purposely hung in the back of the cabinet."

Like all quoted matter in "Lights and Shadows," these lines are printed in smaller type than was employed for the text of the work, and they are, moreover, prefaced by some comments from Mr. Home's pen on "J——" and his séances. It was impossible for the dullest reader of the work to suppose that its author and "J——" were one.

To the American publication mentioned above, the *Popular Science Monthly*, a person of the name of Jastrow contributed, in April, 1889, a paper labelled "The Psychology of Spiritualism." Will it be believed that this person inserted in his libel on Spiritualism the very passage of "J——'s" confession which is quoted in "Lights and Shadows" and is reproduced above, and passed it off on his readers as "*the confession of an exposed medium, D. D. Home*"!!

One of the readers of this statement chanced to be the Mr. Hudson Tuttle elsewhere mentioned in this volume. The circumstances under which Mr. Tuttle's attention was drawn to it are described by the editor of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of Chicago in a leading article (June 15, 1889), which, if perused by Jastrow, must have afforded small pleasure to that estimable individual. Says the editor of the journal :—

"We called the attention of Mr. Hudson Tuttle to the libel, and requested him to hunt up the story which the pseudo-psychic

researcher had used to build his fiction on. Mr. Tuttle, unable to readily find it, wrote to Mrs. Home inquiring if she could refer him to any incident recorded by her husband on which Jastrow's story may have been based. Mr. Tuttle forwards us Mrs. Home's reply:—

"The peculiar impudence of the story,' writes Mrs. Home, 'consists in the fact that it has been taken from one of the exposures of trickery published by Mr. Home himself in "Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism." If you will turn to p. 405<sup>1</sup> of that work, under the heading "Trickery and its Exposure," you will find the passage he quotes, word for word. It was taken by Mr. Home from an American (Spiritualist) journal of the year 1876; but, as he purposely omitted the names of such persons, I do not know to whom it referred, further than that the person's name was "J——." I thank you for having called my attention to this falsehood, and hope the details I here furnish will expose the mendacity of the story and of the person who has published it.'

"On receipt of this information from Mr. Tuttle, we turned to page 405 of 'Lights and Shadows,' and there found the record as stated by Mrs. Home. . . . Mr. Home, giving a history of trickery and exposure, and speaking of a materialiser who was pursued by sceptical investigators at Rochester, N.Y., quotes from an affidavit given by the trickster after being caught. Mr. Home makes this quotation in a separate paragraph and in separate type. The internal evidence of Jastrow's screed proves to a moral certainty that he had 'Lights and Shadows' before him when he abstracted this matter; and that he substituted D. D. Home in place of the trickster whose confession Home was recording in this book. . . .

"The American Society for Psychical Research, with the evidence before it of Jastrow's libel on the good name of the late D. D. Home, has a plain duty to perform."

It is to be hoped that the American Society for Psychical Research has proclaimed its agreement with the editor of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* in the conclusions at which he arrived.

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<sup>1</sup> American edition.



## CHAPTER VIII.

*PROFESSORS FARADAY AND TYNDALL—PUBLIC READINGS—SÉANCES AT BRIGHTON AND IN SCOTLAND.*

“It would be a condescension on my part to pay any more attention to them”—*i.e.*, to the phenomena of Spiritualism.

Such was the reply of Faraday in 1861 to Sir Emerson Tennant when the latter attempted, on his own authority, to bring about a meeting between the man of science and Home. The attention which Faraday had already paid to the phenomena consisted in his having, eight or nine years previously, attended a few séances with self-styled mediums, where nothing seems to have occurred beyond the tilting of a table or two. It did not require the scientific abilities of a Faraday to demonstrate that on such occasions the tipping was performed, consciously or unconsciously, by the mediums themselves.

“Towards the close of 1853,” wrote Home, in “Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism” (pp. 204, 205), “persons could be found everywhere throughout the world who took great interest in the ‘turning and tipping of tables.’ Professor Faraday’s verdict was delivered about this period. As regards Spiritualism in its entirety, that verdict was an essentially foolish one; for, on no better grounds than the data furnished by a few hasty observations, Faraday considered himself competent to condemn the whole subject. I am convinced, however, that, as regards the particular instances of phenomena which came under his scrutiny, his theory was just. The more I have seen of the persons known as ‘tipping mediums,’ the more unable I have been to trace the movements of the table and the messages communicated through those movements to any other source than the so-called mediums themselves. Yet, in at least one half of the cases observed by me, the persons concerned were innocent of all wish or effort to deceive. They simply laboured

under undue excitement of the nervous system, and every attempt to dispel their hallucinations failed."

Faraday had never met Home ; and it was obvious to Sir Emerson Tennant, who had, that in Mr. Home's case the explanation of the great physicist explained nothing. Sir Emerson accordingly suggested to Mr. Robert Bell that it would be very desirable to give Faraday the opportunity of witnessing something more remarkable than the pseudo-phenomena he had demolished in 1853. Bell was of the same opinion, and, without particularly consulting Home in the matter, arranged for a séance at the house of Mrs. Parkes, where the typical representatives of Spiritualism and Science were to meet, provided the consent of both could be obtained. Home, who neither courted scientific notice nor shrank from it, raised no objection and propounded no conditions ; and nothing was wanting but the consent of Faraday, to whom Sir Emerson forthwith addressed himself.

Instead of the simple *Yes* or *No* that might have been expected, Faraday replied by a letter that no impartial critic could consider as adding to the reputation of the writer. He began with a querulous expression of astonishment that Sir Emerson should have thought such a subject as Spiritualism worthy of receiving any further notice from him. Then followed the grandiose intimation already quoted, that it would be a condescension on Faraday's part to agree to a meeting with Mr. Home. He was willing, however, to do so on certain conditions. If the Spiritualist had nothing to stipulate, the man of science had stipulations in plenty ; and some of them read like insults deliberately addressed to Mr. Home, of whom he knew nothing, and who had never sought his notice, and was not then doing so. Here are a few choice specimens, taken *verbatim* from Mr. Faraday's letter to Sir Emerson Tennant :—

"Does Mr. Home make himself responsible for the effects, and identify himself more or less with the cause ?

"If the effects are miracles or the work of spirits, does he admit the utterly contemptible character both of them and their results up to the present time?"

"If they be natural effects without natural law, can they be of any use or value to mankind?"

The first of the three questions, which I have cited from a dozen or more put by Faraday in his letter, displays a complete ignorance of the philosophy of Spiritualism, the second is a gratuitous insult, and the third a piece of unphilosophical nonsense, which one would hardly have expected from the writer. Did Faraday conceive that Home was seriously capable of imagining that there could be natural effects without natural law?

Home never saw this letter of Faraday's. Mr. Robert Bell saw it, and without even transmitting to Mr. Home interrogatories so little to the point, informed Sir Emerson Tennant that, in view of the spirit in which Mr. Faraday approached the subject, it was useless to carry the matter further. The negotiations accordingly dropped, and were never resumed. Knowing Home intimately, Bell quite correctly judged that it was needless even to inquire of him whether he were disposed to accept Faraday's insults to Spiritualism as a necessary preliminary to Faraday's presence at a séance.

The world heard nothing of this correspondence at the time, but seven years later it found its way into print. The Lyon lawsuit was just then forcing Spiritualism upon the attention of the public; and thousands of persons who had never previously concerned themselves about the manifestations became desirous to investigate them. It was at this time that Serjeant Cox sought and made the acquaintance of Mr. Home with a view to enquiry; and I find a letter from another legal luminary—Mr. Henry Matthews, Home's counsel in the suit—expressing to his client his willingness to be convinced. A third member of the same profession, Mr. Lister, writes to Mr. Home on May 30, 1868, from the Temple:—

“I have been hoping to receive a line from you saying when you can come down and spend a few days with me. I should much like to have an opportunity of further inquiry into this much-vexed question of Spiritualism; and if you will be my guide, you will confer a great favour on me . . . J. B. LISTER.”

Professor Tyndall was among the many who shared the curiosity of Messrs. Cox, Matthews, and Lister, but instead of writing to Mr. Home to express his desire to investigate, he wrote to the *Pall Mall Gazette*. In his letter he referred to the Tennant-Bell-Faraday correspondence of 1861, and stated that the conditions laid down by Faraday had been rejected. It would have been more correct, as I have just shown, to state that Faraday had displayed more willingness to insult Home and prejudge Spiritualism than to investigate the phenomena.

Mr. Home replied to Professor Tyndall's not very polite challenge in the *Pall Mall*; and his reply had the effect of bringing on a controversy concerning the precise meaning of the string of interrogatories administered by Faraday in 1861. Like many other discussions, it originated in a misunderstanding, the innocent author of which was Mr. Robert Bell. It was from Bell that Home had received the version of Faraday's behaviour which he gave in his letter of May 5, 1868, to the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

“If Professor Tyndall,” he wrote, “will kindly refer to the correspondence that passed between Professor Faraday and the gentleman he alludes to in his letter” (i.e., Mr. Bell), “he will ascertain that Professor Faraday's last letter was to the effect that his time was so valuable that he could not attend a séance, unless he could have a programme of what would take place. As my ‘performances’ are beyond my own control, this gentleman had the good sense, without even consulting me, to decline. My wife was at the time very ill, and we were lodging with a friend who kept a journal” (Mrs. Parkes, referred to in my previous work); “and this fact was noted in her diary. *For my own part, I never saw one of the letters.* It would have given me much pleasure to meet Professor Faraday. In 1855 he refused to meet me, alleging that his religious scruples

prevented his so doing.<sup>1</sup> Professor Faraday would have been quite at liberty 'to publish in such form as he might deem fit' the result of his investigation. It will give me the same pleasure to meet Professor Tyndall and any two gentlemen he shall designate. On my side, I will have at least two gentlemen whose names and position place them above the suspicion of aiding or abetting a fraud. I will meet Professor Tyndall and these gentlemen when and where they please, and under such circumstances as they may decide on. I must only crave their patience, if nothing should occur at the first or even the second séance. A patient and candid investigation is all I ask. Having been much harassed, and not being in good health, I would postpone this meeting till some time in June."

Professor Tyndall replied in the columns of the *Pall Mall*, denying that Faraday had requested a programme of the manifestations which he was to witness. On reading this letter, Mr. W. M. Wilkinson wrote to the Professor:—"I can fully corroborate what Mr. Home says about Mr. Faraday having refused to come, at the last moment almost, unless he had a programme of the performance previously put into his hands."

Professor Tyndall vouchsafed no notice to the letter of Mr. Wilkinson, who thereupon wrote to him:—"The late Mr. Robert Bell informed me that the proposed meeting did not take place on account of Mr. Faraday demanding a programme."

At this point in the controversy, Sir Emerson Tennant came forward to clear up the misunderstanding concerning the programme in question. He sent to Professor Tyndall the extraordinary letter in which Faraday expressed his reluctance to investigate at all, and insulted Home by demanding, as a condition precedent to the investigation, an acknowledgment that the phenomena were "utterly contemptible." Professor Tyndall, in his turn, sent Faraday's very discourteous epistle to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, with the addition, on his own part:—"P.S.—I hold myself in readiness to witness and investigate, in the spirit of the foregoing letter, such phenomena as Mr. Home may wish to reveal to me during the month of June."

<sup>1</sup> It is well known that Professor Faraday belonged to a small religious sect of pronounced and peculiar views.

Professor Tyndall has never enjoyed the reputation of being a polite letter-writer, but such gratuitous rudeness might well have made Science blush for her distinguished votary. Nothing could have been more courteous than that acceptance by Home of his challenge, which I have just quoted. Most men would have acknowledged the courtesy of their adversary by imitating it, but the Professor's only apparent anxiety was to prove that the mantle of Faraday had descended upon him.

Mr. Home made the reply that was due to his mission and himself. He refused to meet Professor Tyndall "in the spirit of Faraday's letter." The Professor must have known, when he endorsed that letter, that he was making a meeting between himself and Mr. Home impracticable. "I will wait," wrote Home, in withdrawing his offer to meet Tyndall, "until he can approach the subject in a more humble frame of mind."

Mr. G. H. Lewes forthwith rushed into print to inform Mr. Home that "had the tone of Faraday's letter been ten times more offensive, it would have been no excuse for declining the investigation." This view of the case did not commend itself to Professor Palgrave, who, although no Spiritualist, wrote, on May 16, 1868, to the *Pall Mall Gazette* :—"In my opinion, Mr. Home's friend was justified in declining Faraday's challenge, as made by Faraday, and Mr. Home himself would be justified in declining any challenge conceived in a similar spirit."

In his letter refusing to meet Professor Tyndall on the terms set forth by Faraday, Mr. Home explained that the publication of Faraday's letter in the *Pall Mall* was the first that he had seen of it. "All I knew of it," he wrote, "was from the information of the late Mr. Robert Bell, who had arranged with Sir Emerson Tennant for a séance. The time was fixed, and Mr. F. was expected, when Mr. Bell informed me that Mr. Faraday refused to come without having a programme."

It is easy to conceive how Faraday's long string of demands, which Home had never seen, came to be classified as a request for a programme of the séance. Mr. Bell—described by Sir Emerson Tennant in his letter to Professor Tyndall as “an eminent Spiritualist and a friend of Mr. Home”—had declined to transmit to the latter the interrogatories of Professor Faraday. On meeting Home, Bell, no doubt, summed up the dozen or fifteen demands in question by remarking that he had found it useless to carry the matter further, as Mr. Faraday had sent to Sir Emerson a whole programme of impossible conditions, and declined to come to the séance unless Mr. Home accepted them.

The unphilosophical attitude assumed by Faraday on this occasion, and imitated by his faithful disciple, finds somewhat naïve expression in one of the communications addressed by the latter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* (May 17, 1868).

“Faraday,” writes Professor Tyndall, “regarded the necessity even of discussing such phenomena as are ascribed to Mr. Home as a discredit, to use no stronger term, to the education of this age.” I will only remark that there is something diverting in this Olympian thunder-peal, seeing that the light in which Professors Faraday and Tyndall regarded Spiritualism was a matter of absolute indifference to Home, and would in no way have prevented him from meeting these Jupiters of science, if they had not committed the extraordinary and gratuitous impertinence of requiring from him, as a preliminary to investigation, the disavowal of his mission and his cause.

For Faraday's rudeness there was at least the excuse that the subject had been pressed on him against his will by Sir Emerson Tennant, and that he was probably unaware of Sir Emerson having acted on his own responsibility, and without the slightest authority from Mr. Home. Professor Tyndall had no such plea to offer. He was self-invited to meet Mr. Home at a séance, and might have been expected to remember

that courtesy is no less incumbent on a self-appointed inquirer than on a self-invited guest.

As Professor Tyndall never gave any sign of an inclination to approach the subject of Spiritualism in a less arrogant and more philosophical frame of mind, no meeting between him and Mr. Home ever took place. The scientific examination of the phenomena was reserved for another luminary, Mr. Crookes. One might be inclined to wish that the work which was done by the latter had been done by Mr. Faraday or Mr. Tyndall, and to regret the action of those two brilliant stars in rendering a meeting between them and Mr. Home impossible, if it were not for certain considerations ably set forth in a little work from which I have elsewhere quoted—Mr. P. P. Alexander's discussion of his experiences in Edinburgh with Mr. Home:—

"Let us say," wrote this sceptical but unprejudiced investigator, "that some eminent *savant*—Professor Huxley, perhaps—resolves to bring Mr. Home to the test. . . . Presently the scientific world is aghast to hear that Professor Huxley has given in his adhesion to Mr. Home. What would, in such a case, be said by his brother *savants*? Probably, that Professor Huxley, though indeed a very clever person, had, despite all his deep precautions, been hoaxed by a cleverer than he. But suppose it beyond question shown, when the detail of the matter was given, that Professor Huxley in his scientific experiment had eliminated every possible or conceivable source of error, what would *then* be said by the wise men? Such of them as once for all *would not* believe, on the strength of their fundamental axiom, laid down and stuck to, that the thing could not *possibly* be true, was incredible, monstrous, &c., might perhaps be capable of insinuating against Professor Huxley a charge of *collusion* with Mr. Home. Or, possibly, some brother might say, pointing to his own wise head, and shaking it with a look of melancholy sagacity: 'Ah, poor fellow! poor Huxley! but he was always a little —, you understand?'"

Substitute the name of Crookes for that of Huxley, and the theoretical case put by Mr. Alexander is not far from being paralleled by actual facts.

During the progress of his correspondence with Professor Tyndall, Mr. Home found himself compelled to write to the *Star* to contradict some statements which had been published by that journal. The Lyon suit



had stimulated the mendacity of a particular type of journalist; and the *Star* found room in its columns for a revival of the antiquated Parisian fiction that Home had refused to meet Robert Houdin during his stay in France. After disposing of the falsehood in question, Home proceeded:—

“In 1857 I dined with the Prince Napoleon, and after dinner there was a séance. As there were between twenty and thirty guests present, and I never have a séance with more than nine, I was left to select the persons who were to be present. By chance I selected a gentleman well known to be one of the most clever conjurors in France” (M. Canti), “and this gentleman gave testimony that, whatever the power might be, it was not a conjuring trick.”

The journal to which this letter was written had at one time been almost fair in its treatment of Spiritualism. Such was notably the case in the year 1862, when Mr. Edmond Beales was investigating the manifestations at séances with Mr. Home. Mr. Beales induced the *Morning Star* to throw open its columns to a discussion of the phenomena; and the managing editor of that newspaper subsequently accompanied Mr. John Bright to the séance described by Mrs. Senior in my former work. A few years later, however, there appeared as a contributor to the *Star* a journalist calling himself *Le Flâneur*, and described by the *Pall Mall Gazette* of that time (1865) as “a collector of tittle-tattle—making it his regular business to do what various old women do for amusement.” This humble Boswell of his day will possibly be remembered by future generations (if they remember him at all) as having been expelled from the Garrick Club at the instance of Thackeray. In the exercise of his calling as a picker-up of unconsidered rumours, this person found much to say about Spiritualism.

“I have been watching the press and their insolence, and especially Yates,” writes the legal adviser of Mr. Home, on October 29, 1866; “but they seem to steer

somewhat carefully. I agree with you that it is really a duty to take them up, if one can do it. . . . Perhaps if they have a little more rope it will be the best for them."

As the highest compliment which such journalists as Mr. Yates could pay to Spiritualism was to assail it, Mr. Home decided, on consideration, to take no proceedings to restrain their attacks.

When Smollett was lampooned by a writer of the kind, he sent the fellow some money and his thanks; but on finding that he had taken to flattery instead, the insulted author cut short his eulogies with a cudgel. In our day, as in Smollett's, there are writers of whom it would be difficult to say whether it is more honourable to be assailed by them, or more humiliating to become the victim of their praise.

Little was said in my former volume as to the séances of the years associated with the Lyon lawsuit—1867 and 1868. A number of them are recorded in Spiritualist publications of the time; but the testimony given is in so many instances anonymous, that I have found it almost impossible to connect particular manifestations with the persons who witnessed them. To print a list of the numerous investigators of this period would be easy, and to fill a chapter or two with their unsigned narratives of séances be easier still; but to attempt the restoration to each anonymous statement of the names concealed beneath dashes or initials is the most hopeless of tasks. The readers of *Human Nature* and *The Spiritual Magazine* for 1867 and 1868 were regaled with a very surfeit of such valuable evidence as the subjoined:—

"The accordion was carried to Mr. ——. Mr. — said he was being touched. . . . Mrs. — saw a footstool move across the room of its own accord and place itself at her feet. . . . We noticed a luminous halo around the head of Mr. Home. The table with the fern-plant was raised off the ground and carried several feet to Mrs. —. One of our sceptic friends had, in the meantime, laid down on the floor to make sure that no deception was being practised. . . . Mr. Home looked across to where Mrs. —

was seated, and said, 'L—— S—— is standing between you and Mr. ——'. I see her as she was in life—mark, not as she is, but as she was when on earth.' Mr. Home accurately described the person of the spirit. So marked and clear were the traits he delineated that no doubt as to identity was possible. . . . Mr. Home, in the trance, said he saw a spirit-form standing next to a gentleman present. The form, character, and past history were so accurately detailed, that the identity was unmistakably established—much to the surprise of the gentleman, whose departed friend had been quite unknown to Mr. Home," &c., &c.

Several of the investigators, whose experiences were thus deprived of all value as evidence by their publication in an anonymous guise, witnessed a manifestation of somewhat rare occurrence—the alternate increase and diminution in stature of the form of Mr. Home. In a letter of July 4, 1868, Home writes concerning this strange phenomenon :—

"The Viscount Adare, the Master of Lindsay, J. Hawkins Simpson, Esq. (a scientific gentleman), H. D. Jencken, Esq. (barrister-at-law), J. C. Luxmoore, Esq., Mrs. Jencken, Mrs. Hennings, Mrs. Scott Russell, Mrs. Hardinge, Mrs. Floyd—these, my dear Mr. Morgan, are the principal witnesses to my elongation."

During the progress of the inquiry into Spiritualism conducted by the Dialectical Society, Lord Lindsay gave the following account of his observations on various occasions when he had witnessed an increase of stature in Home :—

"Before the elongation commenced," said Lord Lindsay, in describing one of these occurrences, "I placed my foot on his instep. I will swear Home never moved his heels from the ground. When Home was elongated against the wall, Lord Adare placed his foot on Home's instep, and I marked the place on the wall.

"I once saw Home elongated horizontally on the ground. Lord Adare was present. Home seemed to grow at both ends, and pushed myself and Adare away.

"On another occasion I saw Mr. Home, in a trance, elongated eleven inches. I measured him standing up against the wall, and marked the place; not being satisfied with that, I put him in the middle of the room, and placed a candle in front of him, so as to throw a shadow on the wall, which I also marked. When he awoke, I measured him again in his natural size, both directly and

by the shadow, and the results were equal. I can swear that he was not off the ground or standing on tiptoe, as I had full view of his feet; and, moreover, a gentleman present had one of his feet placed over Home's insteps, one hand on his shoulder, and the other on his side, where the false ribs come near the hip-bone."

"Miss Douglas," says the report of the Dialectical Society's Committee, "corroborated the statement of the Master of Lindsay. She also had seen the elongations."

The gentleman referred to by Lord Lindsay as having placed his foot over Home's instep was Mr. H. T. Humphreys, who wrote to the *Echo*, while the Dialectical Society's inquiry was in progress:—

"I have more than once witnessed the Procrustean operation, of which you say, 'that the structure of the human form, as compact of bone and muscle, forbids the possibility.' On the first occasion of my being a witness of this phenomenon, which, if I am correctly informed, was the second of its occurrence to Mr. Home, I placed my feet on his insteps and one hand on his body.

"On the second occasion of my having seen this interesting phenomenon, Mr. Home lay down on the floor, Viscount Adare and the Master of Lindsay standing, the one at his head and the other at his feet; and as he was elongated he pushed each of them away along the floor. On the same evening he walked to the chimney-piece, and taking a candlestick with a lighted candle from it, placed it on his head, and stood facing the company, with his back to the chimney-glass. He was then seen by the eight or nine ladies and gentlemen present to increase in stature to the extent, I should say, of about eight or ten inches. I am not concerned to argue whether such an elongation is 'possible': I know that I, in common with many others, witnessed it."

In addition to bearing testimony to the particular elongation described by Lord Lindsay and Mr. Humphreys, Viscount Adare placed on record nine other instances of this phenomenon which he had witnessed in presence of Mr. Home. The first of these occurred during a séance at Kilmory House, Norwood, the residence of Mrs. Jencken and her son. Viscount Adare noted down at the time the following facts:—that, standing beside him, Home increased in stature at least six inches; and that Mr. Jencken, who was a taller man than Mr. Home, posted himself beside the latter in order to verify the fact, while Lord Adare, stooping

down, placed his hands on Home's feet, and ascertained that they were level on the ground.

Mr. Home held several séances at Kilmory House in the years 1867 and 1868, and beautiful and varied manifestations were witnessed there. One of these is narrated in my former work (pp. 287, 288). It occurred in connection with the passing away of an old and attached attendant of Mrs. Jencken, sen., and was preceded by a phenomenon thus described by her son (*Human Nature*, April, 1868):—

“On the morning of the patient's decease the nurse in attendance was startled by a chant of sweet, solemn music passing through the room which the patient occupied. Raps were heard over and near the bed; and at the request of the sufferer, Mr. Home, who was sleeping in an upper room, was sent for. On his entering the sick-room, the music again, in mournful cadences, swept through the air—in all, the music lasted thirty minutes.”

Shortly afterwards the sick person passed away. In the afternoon of the same day occurred the beautiful manifestation investigated by Mr. J. H. Simpson, with results given in his own words in my former volume.

“The following day,” adds Mr. Jencken, “the medical gentleman who had attended the patient noticed this phenomenon of the wonderfully sweet perfume pervading the room, remarking that it made the impression upon him of something holy.

“Two evenings later, Mr. Home was seated quietly at the fire-side, when raps came close to me, and a sentence was spelt out that we, three of us, should proceed to the room where the body had now been laid out; but not to enter, only stand at the door. This we did; and on opening the door a strong current of perfume passed over us, this time filling the landing, and hall, and house. The phenomenon of perfume entering my house continued up to the day of the funeral—at times being, despite of open windows, quite overpowering. During the whole of the time manifestations of spiritual presence were constantly occurring, and even in my bedroom I was awakened by tremblings of the floor and raps against the wall and bed; and a friend who was staying with me said he had mental questions answered by raps at the foot of his bed, which moved and vibrated.”

During the summer months of 1868 the shattered condition of Home's health rendered tranquillity im-

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perative, and he held but few séances. In August he went to the baths of Homburg, and while staying there was summoned to the presence of the Emperor Alexander II., as appears from the following entry in his diary:—

“Wednesday, September 9, 1868: Went to Ugenheim to pass the evening with the Emperor of Russia.”

Besides this séance with the Emperor, five or six others took place during Home's stay at Homburg. The first was held on August 30th, at Mrs. Hamilton's. In addition to that lady and her daughter, there were present Home's companion in his German journey, Lord Adare; and Lady Fairfax and Mrs. Gregory. A cold air passed round the circle, and various of the ordinary physical manifestations took place. On the 1st of September another circle was formed at Mrs. Hamilton's, but nothing whatever was observed. On a third occasion the sitters were more fortunate. A fourth séance was held on September 13th. As nearly the whole of the sitters present were Spiritualists, it may surprise those persons who maintain that wonders were reserved for believers, to learn that only few and slight manifestations occurred. A fifth séance at Mrs. Hamilton's was more remarkable. Strong vibrations of the table, the chairs of the sitters, and the floor of the room were felt; a spirit-hand was seen by three of the party; and Home twice increased in stature, and as often shrank below his normal height, the room all the while being brightly lit. The witnesses of these phenomena consisted of Mr., Mrs., and Miss Hamilton, Mrs. Mainwaring, Mrs. Spearman, and Viscount Adare.

Returning to England in somewhat improved health, Home once more turned his attention to the reader's platform, and his reappearance there was not long delayed. “Mr. D. D. Home,” the *Court Journal* of January 30, 1869, announced, “has been giving three readings at the Pavilion, Brighton, during the past week, to most appreciative audiences. Mr. Home ranks high as a reader; and so great is his versatility

that he draws tears in some of his pathetic readings, while in his Irish and American anecdotes his humour is so great that he convulses the audience with merriment."

"Mr. Home," said the *Illustrated London News* of May 8, 1869, "appeared on Wednesday week at the Queen's Concert Rooms, Hanover Square, and surprised a numerous and fashionable audience by the display of singular qualifications for his task. There are indeed few such readers as Mr. Home."

Some of the English journals of the time could not forget, in criticising the gifts of the reader, that he was obnoxious to them on account of other gifts. Even in the very appreciative notice accorded by the *Observer* of May 16, 1869, to Home's readings in London, a faint expression of this sentiment finds its way into the closing words; but the writer was, notwithstanding, liberal enough to do justice to the powers of Mr. Home, as follows:—

"Mr. Home has stepped forward with so bold a stride from the ever-increasing body of public readers, that it is but justice to accord frank and ready recognition alike to the ability he has displayed in these performances, and to the success which has attended his efforts. . . . He presents his audience with a programme as varied as are the feelings evoked by his alternately humorous and pathetic delineations. If breathless silence and genuine tears bore witness to the refined pathos with which the reader delivered Caroline Bowles' exquisite poem 'The Young Grey Head,' the uncontrolled laughter that greeted the pleasant maunderings of the American 'Widow Bedott' showed that he could do equal justice to subjects of an opposite character. . . . The reader's voice, though not of great power, is clear and melodious, and so well managed that not the softest accent failed to reach the remotest corner of the room. It is impossible not to desire that a reader possessed of such gifts and, beyond these, a keen and warm appreciation of the beautiful and true in literature, may advance to general popularity in the healthful and acceptable line he has chosen."

Mr. Home did advance to popularity, and speedily. Those whom curiosity had brought to look on the world-famous Spiritualist were enthralled in listening to the reader; and if applause could compensate for the

anxieties and labours inseparable from these public appearances, and for their exhausting effects on his highly-strung temperament, he had his recompense, both in public and private.

"My party were truly delighted yesterday," writes Lord William Lennox to Mr. Home, "and I can conscientiously say that I never heard any better readings. Your pathetic stories are most touching, your comic ones most mirth-provoking; and I think the applause you met with shows how much your exertions were appreciated. You had some good judges in the hall, all of whom seemed delighted. . . . I was happy to read so favourable a notice in the *Daily Telegraph*. I feel disposed to parody Clare's song, and say—

'Midst readers and lecturers tho' you may roam,  
Be they ever so brilliant, there's nothing like Home.'

Lord W. Lennox had been present at séances as well as at readings; so had another correspondent of nearly the same date, Professor Plumptre, himself an elocutionist of the highest order. I select one of several letters from him:—

"BELGRAVE ROAD, ST. JOHN'S WOOD, *April 29th*, 1869.

"MY DEAR SIR,—As the engagements of my friend prevented me last night from having the pleasure of speaking to you after your reading, I cannot refrain from writing these few and very hurried lines this morning to thank you most sincerely for the very great gratification I enjoyed as one of your audience. I have heard in my time many eminent public readers, but I assure you most unfeignedly that, for taste, discrimination, *real, pure pathos*, as well as *genuine humour*, all, too, marked by the greatest refinement and delicacy, I never heard any one to excel yourself. . . . Yours very faithfully,

CHARLES J. PLUMPTRE."

Among other manifestations witnessed by Professor Plumptre in the presence of Mr. Home was that of the instantaneous withdrawal of heat from a burning object, the reality of which phenomenon was tested by Mr. Plumptre in his own person. During a séance at 16, Gloucester Square, Hyde Park, Home held his hands in a blazing fire without harm, and subsequently taking a glowing coal from the grate, placed it in turn in the hands of Mr. J. C. Luxmoore (the host of the evening), and Professor Plumptre, Madame Maurigy, and



Mrs. Hardinge-Britten, none of whom experienced the slightest injury, or even inconvenience, from the contact of the red-hot ember.

About the time when Home was giving his first readings in London, the Dialectical Society was commencing its inquiry into the phenomena of Spiritualism. There can be no doubt that this investigation was an indirect consequence of the Lyon lawsuit; and it may be added that many of the persons whose evidence, oral or written, was now received by the Society concerning séances with Mr. Home, had, a twelvemonth earlier, made affidavits on his behalf in the course of the Lyon suit. The testimony collected by the Committee ranged over all the years between 1855 and 1869, and the opinions of the witnesses concerning the origin of the phenomena were as varied as the manifestations which they had investigated in the presence of Home; but one and all were agreed in declaring them to be *facts*.

To cite here the testimony of the majority of these witnesses would be to repeat much that I have already narrated. A few fresh names, however, present themselves in the course of the Society's report—names that do not appear in the correspondence of Mr. Home, the two volumes of the "Incidents," or any other of the numerous materials of which I have availed myself in the preparation of these pages.

A Mr. Rowcroft, for instance, bore testimony that he had seen a hand playing upon an accordion, and apparently disconnected from any body. This was at Mr. J. E. Jones' house (Enmore Park, Norwood), where he met Mr. Home.

"There was plenty of light," continued Mr. Rowcroft; "six gas-burners were lighted. I saw the hand for about a minute; it accompanied the instrument round the chairs. I was the only person who saw the phenomenon, and there were nine persons present. Mr. Home's disengaged hand rested on the table. All present saw the accordion floating in space."

Mr. Rowcroft further added that he went to the séance an entire sceptic concerning the phenomena.

A Mr. Glover had witnessed manifestations similar to those described by Mr. Rowcroft; but, unlike that more sensible investigator, he went away from his séance with Mr. Home persuaded that the inexplicable must necessarily be the diabolical, and in detailing his experiences to the Dialectical Society's Committee, expressed a vehement opinion to that effect.

The Hon. Mrs. —, while declining to allow the publication of her name, favoured the Committee with the following account of a séance held in her own house with Mr. Home:—

"We were seated in a partially-darkened room. We first heard raps, and then saw a human figure at the window. It entered, and several other figures came trooping in after it. A figure which I recognised as that of a deceased relative came behind my chair, leaned over me, and brushed my hair lightly with its hand. . . . Then, approaching the Master of Lindsay, it passed right through him, causing him to shiver with cold."

"In answer to Mr. Geary," continues the report of the Committee, "the Hon. Mrs. — stated that Mr. Home had no previous access to the room beyond having dined there."

The Hon. Mrs. — also communicated to the Dialectical Society an account of the remarkable séance of March 17th, 1869, described by Mrs. Honynwood and Lord Lindsay in my former volume (pp. 281-283), and testified that she had herself been present. The circle on that occasion consisted of five persons: Mrs. Honynwood, Mrs. Egerton, Lord Lindsay, Captain Gerard Smith, and Mr. Home. I conclude, therefore, that Mrs. Egerton and the Hon. Mrs. — may safely be identified as one and the same witness.

Miss Anna Blackwell, in the course of a lengthy statement of her views concerning Spiritualism, informed the Dialectical Society:—

"Lady D——" (Dunsany) "assures me that a mag-

nificent white flower, as large as a dinner-plate and with long purple stamens, suddenly appeared on a chair close beside her one evening as she sat in her drawing-room in company with Mr. Home. It remained visible to them both for about two minutes, when it melted into the air."

Of Messrs. Rowcroft and Glover, the Hon. Mrs. — (or Egerton), and Miss Blackwell, I can say no more than they chose themselves to say in their communications to the Dialectical Society. This is not, however, the case with the witness whom I am now about to cite—Mrs. Cox of Jermyn Street, widow of the Mr. W. Cox to whom Mr. Home paid a tribute of affectionate remembrance in "The Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism."

Mr. Cox had business habits and aptitudes, and he placed them at the service of Home, of whose temperament they formed no part. Unlike most stewards, he had constantly to complain that no account was ever asked from him; and his many and affectionate letters to Home are filled with remonstrances concerning the latter's unbusiness-like indifference to his own affairs. On this point I may leave Mrs. Cox to speak, in the affidavit made by her during the Lyon suit:—

"I have known the defendant, Daniel Douglas Home, since April 9, 1855, and from that time my late husband had sole charge of Mr. Home's money, the balance of account being often several hundred pounds in Mr. Home's favour. My husband always said Mr. Home was no business man. He entertained, and frequently expressed, respect and esteem for Mr. Home; and Mr. Home, who was then but little more than one-and-twenty, was looked upon by him as a son would have been. I remember my husband often urged Mr. Home to make some money by séances, but could not prevail upon him to do so.

"In 1864 my husband died; and since then I have had sole charge of Mr. Home's money. He never had any other banker than my husband or myself; and he was ever very charitable in giving time and money to the poor, and has often put himself to great inconvenience to visit and help the sick and needy."

Nothing can be truer than this portrait of Home. As Mr. and Mrs. Cox knew him, he remained to the

last—trusting his friends implicitly ; negligent of his own affairs, but ever ready to give his time and money to help others ; yielding on many points, but constant to the principle that he would not traffic in his gift. No persuasions of friends or pressure from poverty could induce him to depart from that resolve.

In her evidence before the Dialectical Society, Mrs. Cox corroborated the testimony previously given by a daughter of Mr. J. E. Jones, of Enmore Park, concerning a levitation of Mr. Home at the country-place of the Cox family in Hampshire. The statement made by Miss Jones may accordingly serve as preface to the evidence of Mrs. Cox :—

“Miss A. Jones,” says the report, “gave an account of certain remarkable phenomena which she had witnessed at a séance held at Stockton House, Mr. Home being present. . . . He went out on to the verandah and was carried from thence right across the lawn, a distance of more than a hundred feet, to a rhododendron bed. He returned, bringing with him a piece of rhododendron ; and, although it was raining fast, he was not at all wet, and the soles of his shoes were dry.”

Mrs. Cox, in her turn, stated to the same Committee that—

“She had seen levitations. She once saw Mr. Home rise gradually in the air, and make a cross on the ceiling with a pencil. She saw him carried out into the garden at Stockton House, as described by Miss Jones at a former meeting of the Committee. She had seen a card-table lifted on to a table, and then removed to a couch, no person touching it. That was at her own house in Jermyn Street.”

The convincing manifestations which made a spiritualist of Mr. Cromwell Varley, F.R.S., are narrated in my former work. Part of his evidence before the Dialectical Society referred to the experiences in question ; another portion of it detailed movements communicated in full light to various inanimate objects which were untouched by Mr. Home or any other person present.

"I remember a case a short time since at my own house," said Mr. Varley, "when a large ottoman pushed us all up in a corner without any visible means of locomotion. Mr. Home was the medium; and while we were sitting round a table, Mr. Home began to shiver. I looked over his shoulder, and there was a side-table coming slowly up towards us."

Mr. Varley was one of the persons who made affidavits in the course of the Lyon case.

"I have been a student of electricity, chemistry, and natural philosophy for twenty-six years," he stated (March 28, 1868), "and a telegraphic engineer by profession for twenty-one years. . . . About eight years ago, I called on Mr. Home and stated that I had not yet witnessed any of the physical phenomena, but that I was a scientific man and wished to investigate them carefully.

"He immediately gave me every facility for the purpose, and desired me to satisfy myself in every possible way; and I have been with him on divers occasions when the phenomena have occurred. I have examined and tested them with him under conditions of my own choice, under a bright light, and have made the most jealous and searching scrutiny. . . . Having experimented with and compared the forces with electricity and magnetism, and after having applied mechanical and mental tests, I entertain no doubt whatever that the manifestations which I have myself examined were not due to the operation of any of the recognised physical laws of nature, *and that there has been present on the occasions above mentioned some intelligence other than that of the medium and observers.*"

Varley was a sceptic at the time of his first séance with Home, and, according to the *dicta* of the *Athenæum*, ought to have witnessed little or nothing. In spite of the *Athenæum*, however, his incredulity was conquered in a single evening by the decisive experiences related in my former work. The angry persistence of Dr. Elliotson in attributing the phenomena to fraud was similarly vanquished by his first séance with Mr. Home. Mr. Buckle's declarations concerning *his* first séance are given in another chapter of this volume. Dr. Hawksley, Captain Chawner, Mr. Nassau Senior, Mr. Ruskin, Dr. Chambers, Dr. Lockhart Robertson, Lord Lindsay, and a crowd of other investigators, whose experiences are contained in this and my pre-

ceding work, all approached the subject of Spiritualism as disbelievers, and were all of them the witnesses of astonishing phenomena at their very first séance. Yet the *Athenæum* could not resist the temptation of telling its readers, in criticising my former volume, that marvels were only to be witnessed by believers. *Credat Zoilus!*

While scepticism could not hinder the manifestations, belief was powerless to call them forth. Lord Dunraven records the failure of several séances with Mr. Home, at which not a single disbeliever in the reality of the manifestations was present. I may add to his testimony that of Lady Caithness (Duchess de Pomar), as communicated by her in a letter addressed to the Dialectical Society towards the close of its inquiry.

"I think it right to mention," wrote the Duchess, "that I have sat several times with Mr. Home without having a single manifestation, even when the whole circle has been composed of friends and Spiritualists.

"At other times we have obtained the most beautiful manifestations through his mediumship; we have thus had messages, movements of inanimate objects, and music, perfect in sentiment and expression, on the accordion, which has frequently played in my hand, when I was sitting near him. Of these séances it will probably be more interesting to mention one which, as we were not sitting for the purpose, should be called '*no séance*.'

"Death was in the house, and the beloved one who had left us was yet uncoffined. I was sitting in the library with my son, at the tea-table; and we were sitting close together, as the sorrow of the hour rendered it natural we should do, when Mr. Home was unexpectedly announced. He had come from a public reading, dressed as he had been on the platform, and consequently with no possibility of the machinery about him which so many unbelievers suppose him to carry concealed. He was quite unaware of the sad event that had occurred, his first intention having been merely to make inquiries at the door. He drew a chair up to the table beside my son, and affectionately placed an arm round his waist.

"Raps were heard almost immediately on the table, on the chandeliers, and in various parts of the room. We adopted the usual course of repeating the alphabet, and '*Not gone away*' was spelt out.

"Directly after this, as if in confirmation of the statement, the favourite seat of the departed, a large arm-chair, which was standing in its usual place near the window at the farther end of the room, moved in a sweep towards the table at which we were sitting, and

came nearly round to my side. Then a sofa moved across the room in another direction. While this was occurring, we three were still sitting at the table, from which Mr. Home had not moved since he first sat down.

"In this case there could be no ocular delusion. No séance had been proposed; we were not even sitting with our hands on the table, as is the custom at séances; and the room was well lighted with gas.

"My son was somewhat alarmed at what had occurred. I, seeing the power was so great, got out an accordion, which I had purchased myself for these occasions, and which had been twice changed at the shop by me; it having been pronounced out of tune by the invisible performers, who always showed us the fact by playing the discordant notes. I then begged them to play something in accordance with our feelings; and a very beautiful and solemn air was played, while Mr. Home held the instrument—which he did, not only under the table, but above it, according to the impulses they gave to it.

"As they finished playing, it came towards me, and Mr. Home told me to take it, which I did; and it then played a favourite tune which I asked for, partly in my hand and partly in his, as he took it from me when the sounds had become faint from my want of power.

"What could I do but believe the evidence of my own senses, corroborated, too, as that evidence has been, by so many others?"

Lady Caithness has proved on many occasions that she is among those who have the courage of their faith.

In August, 1881, the Duchess contributed to the *Spiritualist* an account of a séance with Mr. Home twelve years before.

"On Monday, January 25, 1869," she wrote, "after Mr. Home's first reading at the Pavilion, Brighton, he came to my house. After a little tea, we sat round the table—Mr. Home, my son and I, Miss Needham, Miss Medley, Mr. Collins, Miss Barker, Sir William Linton, and Mr. Walter Lindsay. Lady V—— was also of our party, but spoilt the séance by not consenting to sit at the table. Mr. Home told her that she was equally taking part in the séance by being present; but this she could not understand, neither could she see how she could do harm to the circle by sitting out of it.

"Mr. Home illustrated his meaning by saying: 'Supposing you wanted to send a telegram to London, and the wires were turned off at Red Hill, your message would not go.' I quite understood this, but Lady V—— did not seem to do so. Mr. Home told her (jestingly) that if she thought we were all going to the devil because we sat round the table, it was very wicked of her to sit by and see us go.

"The alphabet was then asked for, and by notes on the accordion

being sounded at the right letters, it was spelt out—‘We wish you to believe that good is at least as powerful as evil.’”

Lady V——, however, refused to accept this spiritual assurance, and finally rose and left the party. On her departure the manifestations were continued with greater power. Hands appeared :—

“But,” writes Lady Caithness, “my son sprang up with such violence to seize one, that again the circle was broken. Then the table was made very light or very heavy, according to our desire. When it was so heavy that Mr. Collins could not lift it, my son again sprang up, and with all his force, with all his might and main, he lifted it up, certainly, but by a great effort of strength. This second sudden movement again broke the circle. We were indeed unfortunate in having so many interruptions.

“However, different messages were spelt out by notes of the accordion ; among others the following (which I wrote down) in answer to some question : ‘God watches over the children of His love.’ Whenever God is named, the music invariably becomes very solemn and slow ; also the spirits never allow one to guess it, like other words, but invariably complete the spelling of it.

“Miss Medley said that a good friend of hers was at sea, coming from Canada. The table immediately began to rise, and heave, and creak, giving us the most exact imitation of a steamship. Miss Medley asked if her friend were safe. ‘Yes,’ was spelt out ; and then, ‘William watches over her’—a message which greatly affected both the inquirer and Miss Needham, for they had evidently been thinking of their friend’s son William, who had lately died. The message continued, ‘And Aunt Elizabeth—tell her not to despond.’

“Then came fragments of music on the accordion—broken music, and the message, ‘The evening has been thus.’ It was but too true. . . . ‘Home, sweet Home’ was played on the accordion most beautifully, and drawn out to great length. It was played twice, as if dying away in the distance, farther and farther, until quite indistinct. No living performer could produce the effect, I am sure. . . .

“I must not forget to mention that the raps were all over the room, about the window, and on the chairs ; that Mr. Home’s chair was moved several times away from mine, and that another chair (empty, to all appearance) behind mine, tried to come and place itself between us. A little round table, covered with heavy books, came by itself from the wall to the table, until it touched Mr. Walter Lindsay’s chair. The wish seemed to be to push Mr. Home’s chair away from me, and for the other chair to come to the table.”

Home has recorded in the “Incidents” that when, at the age of seventeen, these movements of inanimate



objects first produced themselves in his presence, he was startled out of all composure. While alone in his room, he saw in the glass a chair moving slowly towards him.

"My first feeling," he writes, "was one of intense fear, and I looked round to see if there were no escape ; but there was the chair between me and the door, and still it moved towards me, as I continued looking at it. When within about a foot of me it stopped, whereupon I jumped past it, rushed downstairs, seized my hat in the hall, and went out to ponder on this wonderful phenomenon."

Wonderful indeed it appeared to all who were witnesses of it ; and in the majority of instances the surprise which the first sight of such a phenomenon created amounted to absolute fear, as had been the case with Home. The beholder found it almost impossible to believe his eyes, and quite impossible to convince his friends that he had seen what he had seen. Mr. P. P. Alexander's account of the experiences of himself, Dr. Findlater, and their friends Dr. and Mrs. Doun, with Mr. Home in Edinburgh<sup>1</sup> during the spring of 1870, contains a passage very much in point, as illustrating the perplexity of a sceptical inquirer on receiving testimony to the movements of inanimate objects, untouched by human hands, which appeared to him equally irrefutable and incredible.

"The truth is," writes Mr. Alexander, "that this is the sort of thing it might not be quite easy to believe, even were it vouched to us by evidence almost compelling us to admit that rationally we *ought* to believe. Let me illustrate the difficulty here by a little account of a strange thing told me by Dr. Doun, and confirmed by his wife, from whom I had it in a separate narrative. It happened at an early stage of his experience, whilst yet he was scarce a confirmed believer, though 'perplexed in the extreme,' as quite unable to naturally account for the phenomena. A séance having taken place, Mr. Home had left the house ; and the good Doctor was sitting alone in the room, much musing over the odd things that

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<sup>1</sup> "Spiritualism : A Narrative with a Discussion," by Patrick Proctor Alexander, M.A., author of "Mill and Carlyle," "Moral Causation," &c. Edinburgh : W. P. Nimmo, 1871.

had happened, and in a state of great mental puzzlement. 'Suddenly,' he said, 'it seemed to me that one of the chairs opposite me was moving. It *was so*; and I could scarcely believe my eyes when I saw it travel slowly across the carpet and set itself beside my own. Presently another followed, and set itself beside the first. I was very much astonished indeed. At this moment my wife came into the room.'

"Let us allow her to carry on the story. Mrs. Doun had up to this time—as she said—entertained a distinct distaste for the whole business; and her annoyance was considerable at the strong hold it plainly had begun to take of the mind of her husband. When told of what had occurred, she expostulated vigorously. 'Oh, Doctor!' she said, 'I wish you would get that nonsense out of your head. It is *impossible* such a thing should occur; you must be under some delusion; you must merely have imagined it; it can't *possibly* be true.' And then, as if for her prompt contradiction, a third chair left its place; under her very eyes came slowly across the room, and set itself beside the others, to her no little surprise and consternation.

"Do I confidently believe on the evidence that this thing actually happened?" Mr. Alexander continues. "I am not prepared to say I do; but most implicitly I believe in the veracity of the two people, and therefore that *they* believed it, as seen of their own eyes. And how they should have so believed they saw it if the thing did not really happen, I am a little at a loss to know. Had there been only *one* witness, we must with little hesitation have disposed of the fact alleged in the way which at first occurred to Mrs. Doun herself—as spawn of a heated fancy,—some mixed mode of mental and optical delusion. As seen by a *second* witness, engaged at the very instant in making a strong sceptical protest, this explanation of it can scarce, except with much difficulty, be accepted. And yet, if it be not accepted, either the thing must be true, or the people reporting of it *liars*. Personally declining *in toto* to take up with this last supposition, I cannot but regard the evidence to the fact as very strong indeed,—*so* strong that I almost think I *ought* to believe it. Yet, to say sooth, I scarcely *can*; so strong, on the other hand, is the instinctive sceptical recoil from a fact so hitherto unexampled, and in the teeth of all previous experience. Not the less, it is quite certain that, on evidence no more conclusive, indeed considerably less so, as tendered to a fact of murder, I should to-morrow hang with these hands, if need were, some half-dozen of my fellow-creatures. Now, I want to know, is this rational? I don't ask is it scientific? for I know it is quite scientific. But is it rational?"

A supplement to Mr. P. P. Alexander's narrative has recently been furnished by another investigator who was present at some of the manifestations that occurred

while Mr. Home was staying with Dr. Doun. This fresh testimony was printed in the issue for July, 1889, of the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*; and I now avail myself of the permission kindly accorded me to reproduce it here:—

“In 1870 Home visited Scotland, and in Edinburgh stayed at the house of a Dr. Doun. Here General, then Colonel, Boldero first met Home. On February 4, 1870, Colonel Boldero attended a séance at Dr. Doun’s house, and took some notes at the time, which I” (Professor Barrett) “have seen and compared with a full account of the séance that he wrote to Mrs. Boldero the next day. Mrs. Boldero has kindly given me permission to make the following copy of the original letter from her husband, which she fortunately had preserved. It agrees with the notes, and also with the account given me by General Boldero from recollection.

“COPY OF LETTER FROM GENERAL BOLDERO TO HIS WIFE.

“‘We had an excellent séance last night. . . . I reached the house about twenty minutes to eight, found the host and hostess old people—he had been an army doctor, was at Waterloo in the Greys, and is a hale old gentleman of eighty-six. His wife, two nieces—Misses Jamieson; and another lady whose name I did not catch: I will call her K.; Home, and self, and a Mr. Maitland came later. The young ladies’ Christian names were Susan and Elizabeth. We sat round a rosewood round table (it was heavy and had one leg in the centre with three feet) in the following order:—Home, then on his left the hostess, next to her Elizabeth, then self, then Susan, then the host, then K., so back to Home. After about ten minutes the trembling commenced and the table began to move; much cold air was felt. I forgot to mention that the table was covered with an ordinary drawing-room table-cover, and on it rested a piece of paper and pencil, and an accordion of a large size. Raps then commenced; one or two simple questions were asked and answered. Then Home proposed to try the accordion; he held it in his right hand by the bottom, *i.e.*, upside down under the table, and it began to play chords. By his desire I looked under the table, and distinctly saw it open and shut as if some one was playing upon it. It first played an air which no one knew; then, ‘Still so gently’ was asked for and played, also ‘Home, sweet Home.’ Elizabeth then held the instrument, and it played some beautiful chords. Home again took it and held it out from under the table, and music came from it. It then played an air of Moore’s, and ended by a discordant chord. Home said that represented ‘earthly music.’ The accordion then played very softly and beautifully. ‘That is heavenly’:—the accordion gave three deep notes. Five raps were then heard, which signified the desire for the alphabet. Susan took

the pencil. Home repeated the alphabet; and as soon as he came to the letter required he was stopped by the 'spirits,' who rapped three times—sometimes raps under the table, sometimes the table gave three raps on the floor, and sometimes the accordion played three notes. . . .

"Elizabeth's pocket-handkerchief was on her lap; I saw it move, and it was gently drawn under the table and placed upon the Doctor's knees, who sat opposite to her. Susan's pocket-handkerchief and gloves were also lifted up and down.

"Home's chair was moved about the room, and the screen which was placed in front of the fire moved at least a yard by itself. The ladies' dresses were constantly pulled; and they said, or, at least, two of them said, that they saw hands. I myself saw something, but cannot exactly describe what it was.

"Presently Home said to Susan, K., and myself: 'Will you come into the library, and see what will happen there?' The library opened into the landing, where there was a bright gaslight, but the room itself had no light. The door was, however, left wide open; we were round a little table, the rest seated, and I on my knees. In an instant the table began to rock, and a very weird sound was heard in the corner of the room. An immense bookcase, that would require at least four men to move, began slowly to come towards us. In a few minutes Home went off into a trance. He got up and walked about a little, and then came to me and took me by the hand, saying, 'Will you look at Dan's feet and see that he does not move them off the ground, and tell the others to look at his head?' I watched, and saw his whole body elongate as much as nine inches or a foot. I went and felt his feet, and found them on the ground. I must tell you he was standing where the light of the gas in the landing fell upon him. It was an extraordinary sight. He then said, 'Come here.' So I went back to him. He was still of prolonged stature. He took both my hands and placed them on each side of his waist above his hips; there was a vacuum between his waistcoat and trousers. 'Feel, that you may be satisfied;' and surely enough he came back to his own size, and I could feel the flesh shrink. He again was elongated; and I could feel his flesh stretch and again shrink. It was most extraordinary to see him gradually lengthen.

"He then walked about a little, and went up to his bedroom. I followed, and saw him put his hand into the fire and take out a burning coal. I called the ladies, not wishing them to lose the sight, but they seemed to have a bad effect; for, as they were coming up, he told them not to come, and put back the coal he had been carrying into the grate, and said that something was wanting on the part of the ladies—that they were afraid he would be hurt. He then returned to the library, and began talking. He told some curious things that I will tell you to-morrow, as this is long enough. . . .

“‘After he was out of the trance, he appeared both fresher and better than before he went into it. Altogether it was a weird and curious spectacle in the library.’

“In the same month, February, 1870, Mrs. Boldero, together with her husband, had a sitting with Mr. Home at Dr. Doun’s house; General Bulwer (then Colonel) accompanied them. There were also present Dr. and Mrs. Doun, Miss E. Jamieson, and two other ladies—nine in all, including Home.

“The following is Mrs. Boldero’s account of this séance:—

“‘We all sat at a table in the drawing-room for an hour, and nothing happened. Home then said to me” (Mrs. Boldero), “This is dull work.” I replied, “I feel the influence of a lady present prevents the manifestation.” So, to avoid appearing rude, Home proposed an adjournment to the dining-room, and on our way thither asked Mrs. Doun if she would mind sitting out of the circle with the lady in question. This was done, and we seven now sat at the oblong table in the dining-room in good light. Immediately noises began; an accordion, held with one hand by Home, played. I felt a tapping on my foot, and looking down, saw a round hassock standing up on its edge and, untouched by any one, tapping my foot. I clearly saw it rise and fall several times, then it rolled itself away from me and went to another of the sitters. Shortly after, a valuable bracelet I was wearing unclasped itself from my wrist, opened, and fell to the ground. This was my first introduction to Home and to Spiritualism.’

“Subsequently, Colonel Boldero invited Home to stay with him at his house, Belfield, Coupar, Fife, N.B. Home arrived at Belfield on Sunday evening, February 28, 1870. He had never entered the house before, and he arrived from Aberdeen only just in time to dress for dinner. Upon re-entering the drawing-room, he was asked at once to take Mrs. Boldero in to dinner; shortly after dinner, they all three returned to the drawing-room, and agreed to sit at once by a card-table near the fire; so that no time was afforded for Home to make any preparations, if he had required such. Mrs. Boldero wrote an account some time afterwards of what occurred; but, before reading this, I” (Professor Barrett) “obtained General Boldero’s independent evidence, and then compared it with his wife’s account. I give both accounts; and upon reading Mrs. Boldero’s evidence to her husband, he agreed that where a difference existed, his wife’s account was probably the more correct.

#### “GENERAL BOLDERO’S ACCOUNT.

“‘It was at the end of February, 1870, Home came to visit me by invitation, at my house in Coupar, Fife. He arrived immediately before dinner; and after dinner, we, Mrs. Boldero, Home, and myself, sat in the drawing-room for any manifestations that might occur. The room was quite light, the gas being lighted, and

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a bright fire burning. Home sat with his back to the fire, at a small table with a cloth on it; I was opposite to him, and Mrs. Boldero was on his right hand. A piano and Mrs. Boldero's harp were at the end of the drawing-room, some 10 or 12 feet away. Almost immediately some manifestations occurred; in a little while the table moved towards the piano. I saw a hand come out on my side from under the table, pushing out the tablecloth and striking notes on the piano. Afterwards I saw a whole hand as far as the wrist appear without the tablecloth and strike the notes, playing some chords on the piano. At this time Home was some distance off, and it was physically impossible for him to have struck the piano. It was equally impossible for him to have used his foot for the purpose. I was perfectly confident at the time, and am now, that trickery on the part of Home was out of the question. After that, some chords were faintly struck on the harp standing immediately behind me. We asked for them to play louder, and a reply came by raps, "We have not power." Then voices were heard speaking together in the room, two different persons, judging from the intonation. We could not make out the words spoken, as Home persisted in speaking to us all the time. We remonstrated with him for speaking; and he replied, "I spoke purposely that you might be convinced the voices were not due to any ventriloquism on my part, as this is impossible when any one is speaking in his natural voice." Home's voice was quite unlike that of the voices heard in the air.'

"MRS. BOLDERO'S ACCOUNT OF THE SAME SÉANCE.

"On February 28, 1870, Home arrived at our house shortly before dinner. After dinner we agreed to sit in the drawing-room, at a square card-table near the fire. In a few minutes, a cold draught of air was felt on our hands and knockings occurred. . . . A rustling of dresses was heard, as of a stiff silk dress in the room. (General Boldero recollects this also.) My gold bracelet was unclasped whilst my hands were on the table, and fell upon the floor. (General Boldero agrees to this.) My dress was pulled several times. I think I asked if the piano could be played; it stood at least 12 feet or 14 feet away from us. Almost at once the softest music sounded. I went up to the piano and opened it; I then saw the keys depressed, but no one playing. I stood by its side and watched it, hearing the most lovely chords; the keys seemed to be struck by some invisible hand; all this time Home was far distant from the piano. Then a faint sound was heard upon my harp, as of the wind blowing over its strings. I asked if it could be played louder: an answer came, there was insufficient power. Later on in the evening, we distinctly heard two voices talking together in the room. The voices appeared to come from opposite corners, from near the ceiling, and apparently proceeded from a man and child, but we could not distinguish the words. They sounded far off. Home

was talking the whole time the voices were heard, and gave as his reason that he might not be accused of ventriloquism. During the whole of this séance, the whole room seemed to be *alive* with something; and I remember thinking that no manifestation would surprise me, feeling that the power present could produce anything. Home himself remarked that he had rarely had so satisfactory a séance, attributing it to the fact that the conditions were unusually genial, being undisturbed by any conflicting elements.

“I am perfectly sure that Home could not possibly have played the piano himself; touching is wholly out of the question. General Boldero saw a hand playing on the piano, but I did not see this.”

“At one séance with Home, General Boldero states he saw a large round table, on which the hands of the sitters were placed, rise clean off the ground to a height as great as the upstretched arms of the sitters would allow, and then the table came down quite gently.

“On another occasion, the table was tilted to such an angle that all the glasses and a lamp that was on it would ordinarily have fallen off, yet they remained undisturbed.

“Another séance General Boldero clearly remembers. It was at the Northern Hotel, Aberdeen. Home was giving some recitations in Aberdeen; and the reporters of the local newspaper having come to the hotel to see Home before preparing their report, Home asked them to stay and have supper. General Boldero, arriving at the time, joined the party. A loud rap on the sideboard frightened the waiters; then raps were heard on the cornice of the ceiling. The table quivered so violently and the plates rattled and moved so much, that General Boldero states he was obliged to stop eating. The table was cleared, and a message came by raps to one of the reporters present, purporting to be from a dead brother. The reporter told General Boldero that it was perfectly correct, and was much moved. During the séance a large arm-chair near the fireplace rushed across the room and up to the table, placing itself near one of the reporters at some distance from Home. General Boldero states that all felt this to be a most remarkable manifestation, as Home had not been into the coffee-room where they were at supper till they all entered it together, and no thread or trickery of any kind could have moved the chair with the precision and velocity with which it left its place and abruptly joined them at the table.”

Dr. Hawksley's evidence concerning various of his experiences with Mr. Home was given in my former work. At the request of the Society for Psychical Research, he contributed to their *Journal* for July, 1889, the following supplementary particulars:—

“I have a few points to add to my evidence given in Madame Home's book, pp. 186–189.

"1. On the occasion (p. 188) when I took Mr. Home to dine with Lord —, we sat in a large saloon. Raps were at once heard travelling all round the cornice of this large room. Lord —, who sat at the opposite side of the table from Home, deposed that a hand grasped his beneath the table. Home could not have reached so far. It was a large table, and quite impracticable for Home to reach the noble Lord by hand or foot.

"2. On one occasion I received in my own house a telegram announcing the sudden death of an old friend at a distance, Mrs. Slingsby Shafto. I did not mention this to any one, and went out. Happening to pass Cox's Hotel, I looked in on the Homes, and found them with some friends *en séance*. They asked me to come in, which I did, but I did not put my hands on the table. Raps came announcing a friend for me, and the name Slingsby Shafto was spelt out. Messages followed, but nothing which my own mind might not have supplied. I cannot say that I ever heard messages given which contained information certainly unknown to all the sitters; and my own theory is that Home's own spirit, or some spirit possessing Home, was able to acquire the knowledge in the minds of the persons present and to reproduce it with physical movements superadded. Personally, I believe that any communications received by me were such as could be indited or given by an agency which could read my own unuttered thoughts or feelings.

"3. I knew Home intimately, but had never any reason to think that he received money for his séances. . . . I never heard of Mr. Home receiving or taking money.

"The physical phenomena, which were often more considerable than any one man could produce, such as the lifting a heavy centre table with a 12-stone man upon it, so that I could sweep my arms freely beneath the castors of the claws; others highly artistic, such as the playing of musical instruments, and psychically exhibiting a more than human capacity, as when it played the airs and songs suggested only by the unuttered wish of a person present:—I say that these facts, seen in the broad light of day, in rooms and on occasions when preparation or collusion of any kind was absolutely impossible, brought me to the belief that in Mr. Home's case there existed in or about his person an invisible agent, capable of going out of his person and operating at a considerable distance from it. . . .

"Recalling the superlative and gross degree of the physical manifestations, which carried the evidence so far above any possibility of doubt, I feel just as much confidence in the truth and reality of what I saw as I do of my own existence. THOMAS HAWKSELEY."

The following letter also appears in the Psychical Society's *Journal* for July, 1889, and adds another item to the mass of evidence furnished in this and my pre-



vious work concerning the phenomenon of innocuous contact with fire:—

“44, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, LONDON, W.C.

“As you ask me to write to you of what occurred at our house in Kilburn, where we were living in 1869, with reference to the handling of red-hot coal, I will merely say that one Sunday evening, in the winter of that year, I saw Mr. Home take out of our drawing-room fire a red-hot coal a little less in size than a cricket-ball, and carry it up and down the drawing-room. He said to Lord Adare, now Lord Dunraven, who was present, ‘Will you take it from me? It will not hurt you.’ Lord Adare took it from him, and held it in his hand for about half a minute, and before he threw it back in the fire I put my hand pretty close to it, and felt the heat to be like that of a live coal.

W. M. WILKINSON.”

The Mr. Hawkins Simpson whose experiences are referred to in another chapter contributed the subjoined particulars of phenomena witnessed by him to the Society's *Journal* (July, 1889):—

“CORFE CASTLE, WAREHAM.

“In 1868 I was investigating D. D. Home's phenomena. On one occasion, in good light and in the centre of the room, I tested his elongation and contraction *repeated several times* in rapid succession; Lord Crawford (then Master of Lindsay) helping me. I placed Mr. Home—in trance—facing me; his heels on the floor and his toes on my insteps, and a large music-book stretched over our two heads. Whilst I observed his face, Lord Crawford carefully handled muscles of legs, and observed the waistcoat rise two or three inches above the trousers' tops, and fall again. We then changed places, and I tested muscles of legs. The changes Mr. Home's *face* underwent, first larger, then smaller, then normal size, were extraordinary. First his face seemed gradually to be enlarged at all points; then it gradually became small in features, and deeply wrinkled and puckered.

“After this he was levitated, slowly, and swaying from side to side in the air, on to the sofa, no one near him or myself.

“J. HAWKINS SIMPSON.”

On the very evening following the séance already described by Lady Caithness, another was held at Brighton, of which she gives the following account:—

“On Tuesday, January 26, 1869, we met at the house of Field-Marshal Sir William Gomm, 33, Brunswick Terrace, Brighton, after the second of Mr. Home's readings at the Pavilion. Lady Louisa Kerr, Mr. Home, and I drove to Lady Gomm's in my carriage. . . .

Sir William had retired to bed, not being well ; and after tea we sat round a table in the large drawing-room, lighted by two gas-lamps, which, however, were lowered a little, but sufficient light was left for us to write by. I had taken paper and pencil with me, and I brought away the messages. We were very few—on one side of Mr. Home sat Lady Gomm, next to her Lady Louisa, then Mr. Douglas, whilst I sat on the other side of Mr. Home. Thus we were only five in all.

“Hands appeared almost directly ; four of us saw a very large and white one on Lady Gomm’s arm. *She* did not, but she felt herself touched several times ; so did we all.”

Loud rappings were heard, whereupon

“Mr. Douglas remarked that it sounded like electricity. ‘*Yes, Edward, but it is the electricity of love,*’ was signalled out on the accordion in notes of music. In the same way we were told :—

“‘We would have your earth lives thus’ (here beautifully soft music was played) ‘*that your spirit lives may be thus.*’ A full, rich, swelling harmony followed, which perfectly described the idea they wished to convey.”

Lady Caithness then narrates the occurrence of phenomena similar to those already attested by numerous witnesses :—the touch of spirit-hands, the taking of a flower worn by Mr. Home from his button-hole and the placing it in her hand by a small hand that was distinctly visible to her. “I have preserved the bouquet in remembrance of the evening,” she adds, “and have had it framed.”

The evening concluded with a manifestation of somewhat rare occurrence, and even more beautiful than rare—a manifestation unforgettable by all who have ever witnessed it.

“In answer to some conversation of ours,” relates Lady Caithness, “the following message was rapped out :—

“‘*It brings Light, and Light is Love.*’

“Almost immediately a bright, clear pale light shone over the table, lighting us all up, clear and white as moonlight. We all saw it. It was very beautiful, and quite shamed the artificial light. Strange to say,

it seemed to shine out through Mr. Home ; at all events, he was very much illumined."

"The phenomena of light, colour, and music are exquisitely beautiful." This testimony was given, in the July following the séances at Brighton, by a scientific investigator who had enjoyed numerous opportunities of testing the truth of his statement during séances with Mr. Home in the years 1867 and 1868. With the relation of one of his experiences I commence my next chapter.

## CHAPTER IX.

*SCIENTIFIC OBSERVERS DESCRIBE THE VISION SEEN BY THEM IN A CRYSTAL SPHERE—OTHER REMARKABLE PHENOMENA.*

IF a member of the Royal Society were informed that in London, in the year 1868, a crystal sphere had presented the same vision at one and the same moment to a party of observers stationed at opposite points of view, he would doubtless deal with the statement as Science has always dealt with the phenomena of Spiritualism. In the first instance, he would scout the story as a fable, and when driven from that position, would assume that the witnesses to the fact were the victims of a hallucination from which the least acquaintance with the laws of physics would have preserved them. Science, he would declare, regards only the evidence of scientific men as of any value when she deals with such a subject as Spiritualism, and what the rest of the world may have seen, or have fancied they saw in the presence of Home, is immaterial to her.

This unscientific assumption of scientific infallibility becomes all the more inadmissible in view of the fact that the very men who arrogated to themselves the sole right to sit in judgment on the phenomena were those who most persistently refused to exercise it. Professors Sharpey and Stokes, the two secretaries of the Royal Society, were invited to be present at séances with Mr. Home in the house of Mr. Crookes. Both declined the invitation. The Royal Society itself refused to discuss the papers of Professor Crookes on his experiments. The ridiculous and impertinent conditions insisted upon by Professors Faraday and Tyndall

as a preliminary to "the condescension of investigation," were evidently an excuse for eluding that verification of the phenomena occurring in presence of Home which would overturn their theories. If no means had been furnished them of testing those truths by the analytic method, the conduct of the men of science who refused to be present at the séances of Home, or invented some pretext for absenting themselves, would have had an excuse. Home, however, addressed himself constantly to those who believe only what their understanding makes clear to them, to those who boldly deny the existence of phenomena beyond their grasp, such as the soul itself, and who, in consequence, deny its immortality and individuality. To reject these things from pure materialism, and on empty pretences, is not a manner of proving oneself in the right, and still less an evidence of science. To avoid exposing the feebleness of their cause, such champions declined, as far as possible, to place themselves in a position for verifying the truth. These false guides have always existed; and in our own time they abound, and dissemble behind the disputations with which they fill the world the enmity each feels for the other. Admitting no possibility of phenomena other than those within their observation, they declare dogmatically to their listeners that nothing exists outside the scope of their intelligence, and everything ceases where their vision does not extend. This is not an addition to science and progress, but an ancient doctrine of false teachers, who have always quarrelled, and will always continue to quarrel, among themselves, in spite of their having for base the same fundamental error.

The great aim of Home was to demonstrate the existence of the soul by the profound evidence of the marvellous facts furnished through him, and to establish the study of them on a scientific basis. This devotion, without truce or repose, was the cause of a long and cruel malady; but for him to live was to advance towards death, to die was to enter on life eternal.

In view of the unwillingness of science to approach the subject of Spiritualism, the presence of two scientific inquirers at the same séance would invest the occasion with interest, even had the phenomena witnessed been less remarkable. The séance in question was one of the many held in 1867-68 with the Jencken family at Kilmory House, Norwood. Accounts of various of the manifestations observed were contributed by Mr. H. D. Jencken to the Spiritualist publications of the time, but the phenomenon of the vision seen in a crystal is not recorded among them. The omission is the less to be regretted in view of the fact that Mr. Jencken's testimony would appear of small account to the world in comparison with that of more scientific observers. Of such witnesses I have two to cite—the Earl of Crawford and Mr. J. H. Simpson.

On the scientific attainments of Lord Crawford (then Lord Lindsay) it is needless to dwell ; but as the reader has very possibly never heard of Mr. J. Hawkins Simpson (now of Corfe Castle, Wareham), I may remark that he is described in an affidavit sworn during the Lyon suit as “an inventor of electrical apparatus, including one for printing at a distance by the telegraph.” He was thus a practical, if obscure, worker in the field of science ; and as a practical mechanic and an expert in all applications of electricity and magnetism, he was invited by Mr. Jencken to be present at various séances held during the months of January and February, 1868, and was requested by Mr. Home to test the phenomena in every way he desired. His methods of procedure seem to have anticipated, to some extent, those employed by Mr. Crookes, in proof of which fact I may cite the following portion of the testimony given by Mr. Jencken (*Human Nature* and “Incidents in My Life,” vol. ii. pp. 187, 188) :—

“We had, as usual, seated ourselves round a table in the drawing-room, and after the lapse of a considerable time the trembling of the floor, movement of the table, and vibration of the semi-grand commenced. Mr. Simpson, whose scientific training had given him the

aptitude for experiment, suggested the placing of a large, flat music-book on rollers on the table, and then for us to rest our fingers on the edge of the book, the object being to check any involuntary movements. Much to my satisfaction, the table moved more violently than before, and Mr. Simpson, who had lain down on the floor to observe the movement of the table more closely, quite satisfied himself of the independent motion.

"We next suggested trying the alternating weight and lightness of the table, a manifestation occasionally produced. Mr. Simpson re-examined the table to satisfy himself that no disturbing cause could interfere; this done, we made the request to have the table 'heavy.' On attempting to raise it, we could not possibly manage to lift it. Then we requested that the table should be made 'light;' and the table, only just before heavy and immovable, could now be raised upon the slightest effort. Mr. Simpson, satisfied with this test, suggested repeating the experiment with the music-book which had been placed on rollers on the table. I at first quite doubted the result; but, on trying to raise the edge of the book, it felt as if it cleaved to the table; and then, on changing it to 'Let it be light,' the book became as light as a feather. Again and again we repeated the experiment, and finally satisfied ourselves of the important fact of an independent agency guided by intelligence. . . .

"We had all we could desire—a strong, clear light, our own home for our theatre of operation, our own friends with us, a scientific man at my elbow, ready to catch at a shadow of a doubt, and whom we allowed to arrange at will and place himself in any position he chose; and Mr. Home, the medium—good-tempered in the extreme—actuated only by a sincere desire to aid the investigation.

"Later in the evening, the accordion, which had been placed on the table, spontaneously moved six to eight inches from one side of the table towards the other—not a hand, not a finger touching it. The semi-grand was raised off the ground and moved a foot from the wall into the room, no one touching the piano at the time. An adjoining oval walnut-wood table trembled, raised itself first on one leg, then on the other, and glided up to our table. Mr. Simpson, at my request, placed himself on the floor to watch the movement, and, after a rigorous examination, satisfied himself that the motions were produced by an unseen independent agency.

"We had now re-seated ourselves, when we noticed the curtains being pushed into the room; first, the curtains behind Mr. Home, then those of the farther window. They were then drawn aside, and I noticed a hand—for a moment only—between the curtain and the table. As if to give us a final proof of independent action, the water-decanter and wine-decanter on the tray with refreshments, which we had placed on the adjoining table, moved and tilted, the water-bottle placing itself at the edge of the tray. Of course, my friend" (Mr. Simpson) "was on the alert, re-examined curtain, table, and tray, and pronounced the coast clear of magnets or other appliances."

It was during this séance that an air played by no mortal hand afforded the beautiful and touching proof of identity which I have recorded in another chapter.

On the evening when Lord Lindsay and Mr. J. H. Simpson met at Kilmory House, some experiments were tried with crystals. They were not the first that Lord Lindsay had made in the course of his investigations of the phenomena. I leave the vision witnessed that evening at Norwood to be related by him in his statement read before the Dialectical Society on July 6, 1869:—

“Another time, at Mr. Jencken’s house,” attested Lord Lindsay, “I saw a crystal ball placed on Mr. Home’s head emit flashes of coloured light, following the order of the spectrum. The crystal was spherical, so that it could not have given prismatic colours. After this it changed, *and we all saw a view of the sea, as if we were looking at it from a high cliff. It seemed to be the evening, as the sun was setting like a globe of fire, lighting up a broad path over the little waves. The moon was faintly visible in the south, and as the sun set, her power increased. We saw also a few stars; and suddenly the whole thing vanished, like shutting the slide of a magic lantern, and the crystal was dead.* The whole appearance lasted about ten minutes, and pleased us very much, both on account of the curious nature of the vision, if it may be called such, and from the really beautiful effects of light, &c., that we had seen.”

Why should this phantom landscape, or, rather, seascape, have appeared within a crystal placed on the head of Mr. Home? The phenomenon was visible, Lord Lindsay notes, to *all* the persons present, though placed at opposite points of view. To which of their number was this beautiful and wonderful manifestation more particularly addressed? Mr. Simpson answers these questions in a letter written by him on July 19, 1869, to Dr. Edmunds, secretary of the Dialectical Society, who, after the reading of Lord Lindsay’s paper,



had addressed to Mr. Simpson a request that he would in turn communicate his experiences.

"When I tell you," wrote Mr. Simpson, "that a large landscape view, *as carried in my brain*, was made perfectly visible in a spherical crystal to every one in a dark room, *although the individuals composing the party occupied opposite places to each other*, and no one, except Mr. Home, who held the crystal, was within three feet of the crystal, you will admit that a field of inquiry is here opened up which would yield results increasing our knowledge of mental action, &c. Colours were similarly produced, *though I could not gather that any brain then present was the exciting cause*. Every colour of the rainbow was given brilliantly, especially the violet of a very opaque character; and that (as was rapped out), 'to show the violet as seen by disembodied spirits.'

"I express no opinion as to the intelligence which directs the wonderful phenomena, *those of light, colour, and music being exquisitely beautiful*, because I am determined to take nothing for granted; but I can safely say that patient and earnest study of the subject by a disciplined body would bring knowledge that would be a blessing to mankind. . . .

"But what patience is required, and what hesitation in making stray asseverations."

What explanation has science to offer of the phenomena simultaneously witnessed by two scientific observers at Kilmory House, and attested by them in the words here quoted? Science will hardly contend, I presume, that Mr. Home was capable of reproducing in a crystal the mental photograph carried in Mr. Simpson's brain, and not only of reproducing it, but of rendering it simultaneously visible to observers stationed on opposite sides of the crystal sphere? Such a hypothesis would seem to any impartial person more difficult of acceptance than any of the tenets of Spiritualism?

The day after one of the séances of Mr. Home with Mr. Simpson, the latter attended a "séance" given by one of those persons who traded in the manufacture of sham phenomena. The genuine manifestations had been witnessed in the light; the pretended manifestations subsequently investigated by Mr. Simpson required the shelter of total obscurity. A letter from him to Mr. Home (January 14, 1868) describes what ensued. In spite of the darkness, the investigator easily succeeded,

he states, in detecting the fact of fraud ; and his prompt denunciation of the imposture, and his demonstration of the *modus operandi*, produced the effect of the apparition of Banquo at the revels of Macbeth—the “séance” ended in “admired disorder.” “I expressed my opinion more strongly than some of those present—operators included—liked,” he writes to Mr. Home. “Many things were proposed to me ‘to satisfy me,’ all of which I at once denounced as simple attempts to impose upon ignorance or credulity. The tests I asked for (giving the reasons) were, of course, first promised and never fulfilled ; or else, as in the last case, stoppers to the exhibition, which collapsed in the most sudden way. . . .

“There could be no greater contrast than that of the disgusting, dark affair of last night with the beautiful light-loving series of phenomena which I had the privilege of witnessing the previous night, thanks to yourself. Believe me, in a special degree, your sincerely obliged  
J. HAWKINS SIMPSON.”

Like many other “sincerely obliged” persons, Mr. Simpson has manifested his grateful sense of obligation to Mr. Home by keeping his experiences as much as possible to himself. That he was present at a number of séances I have already shown, and that he was fortunate in witnessing numerous and beautiful manifestations appears from his own declaration, made in a letter of the year 1868 to *Human Nature*. “After having carefully tested varied phenomena due to Mr. Home’s mediumship,” he wrote, “I find from my MS. that the mere description of them would fill above 100 pages, with the needful notes concisely written, but going into mental and physical explanations.”

As Mr. Simpson is still on earth, his hundred pages of evidence may yet be given to the world. The public, in fact, may have them when it will ; for although Mr. Simpson has brusquely declined to furnish me with any particulars of the facts verified by him under those cir-

cumstances of special obligation which his letter to Mr. Home expresses, or even to answer my questions concerning two manifestations of which I was already partly informed, I understand that he has most generously offered to dispose of his notes of Home's séances—those séances for which no money was ever given—for the sum of one hundred pounds.<sup>1</sup> Evidently Mr. Simpson feels that his hundred pages would be of high value to the world.

At Kilmory House, after his first séance with Mr. Home, Lord Lindsay passed the strange night described by him in my former volume (pp. 288, 289). So much of the evidence communicated by him to the Dialectical Society has already been given in my pages, that there is but little I can add without the risk of repetition. The following, however, are additional particulars:—

"I have seen a grand pianoforte," attested Lord Lindsay, "raised in the air about four inches without any noise, and subsequently the notes were struck, although it was locked and the key taken away. . . .

"A few weeks ago" (*i.e.*, a few weeks previous to July, 1869) "I was at a séance with eight others; of these, seven held a red-hot coal without pain, and the two others could not bear the approach of it. Of the seven, four were ladies. That same evening Home went to the piano and began playing upon it. He called to us to come and stand round him and it. I was next to him. I had one hand on his chair and the other on the piano; and while he played both his chair and the piano rose about three inches, and then settled down again."

Miss Douglas corroborated the portion of Lord Lindsay's evidence which related to the handling of red-hot coals. "I touched them," she informed the Dialectical Society; "at first they scorched me, but immediately after felt cold, like marble."

In a letter of July 14, 1871, to the *Spiritualist*, Lord Lindsay gives the following account of an experiment made by him three days before:—

"On the evening of the 11th July I was showing some experi-

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<sup>1</sup> On learning this, I offered to purchase them, but the bargain was not effected.

ments in my laboratory to Lord Adare, Mr. Bergheim, Mr. Home, and my brother-in-law.

"It occurred to me to try if Home was able to see a magnet in the dark. This is an experiment which, I believe, was made by Reichenbach ; and although, like myself, he was never able to distinguish the light, yet he found a number of persons who did see it under test conditions.

"I asked Mr. Home, and he expressed himself willing to try the experiment. I then took into one of my rooms, which was totally dark, a large permanent magnet, and having removed the armature, I placed it on the floor near the wall, at a considerable distance from the door.

"Mr. Home was then brought into the room, and remained standing near the door for some moments. He then said that he saw some sort of light on the floor in a corner of the room, and immediately said to me, 'Give me your hand, and I will show you exactly where I see it.' He then led me straight across the room, and, without the least hesitation, stooped down and placed my hand on the magnet.

"I have been trying for more than two years" (*i.e.*, with other persons than Mr. Home) "to get a satisfactory result in this experiment, but hitherto with only doubtful success.

"The instrument used was a large compound magnet, capable of sustaining a weight of about 20 lbs. LINDSAY."

Viscount Adare was present at the séance referred to in the evidence of Miss Douglas. The circumstances under which that lady experienced the phenomenon of innocuous contact with fire were as follows :—

Mr. Home, in a trance, took from the fireplace with his hand a red-hot glowing ember, "about the size of a small orange." Fearing that he would request her to take it, a lady present, Mrs. Gregory, shrank nervously away ; on which Mr. Home approached Miss Douglas, saying, "If you have sufficient faith, let me place this coal in your hand." "Yes," she answered, "I have faith, but I cannot overcome the physical dread ; so pray do not ask me to take it." After endeavouring in vain to reassure Miss Douglas by making her remark that his own hand had not received any harm from contact with the red ember which he was holding, Home added, "It will not burn him," pointing to the Master of Lindsay, on whose head he now placed the coal ; but as it had by this time become black, he

removed it, and saying, "That is not of much use as an experiment, for the natural heat has almost left the coal," crumbled it in his hand, and threw it into the fireplace. Miss Douglas had now conquered her dread, and when Home presently took another red-hot ember from the fire, she stretched out her hand for it, and held it without receiving the slightest harm. After a few seconds Home took the coal from her hand, and asked a gentleman present—Mr. Charles Blackburn—if he had faith that it would not harm him. A reply in the affirmative was followed by the repetition in Mr. Blackburn's case of the experience of Miss Douglas—the red ember lay harmless in his hand. Mr. Blackburn felt the heat which had been, instantaneously withdrawn beginning slowly to return, and at the end of a minute or so, the ember, which had at first felt cold as marble, was stated by him to have grown quite warm, though not painfully so.

Some months after the apparition witnessed by the Master of Lindsay when sharing Home's room at Kilmorey House, Norwood,<sup>1</sup> Viscount Adare, after a séance at Enmore Park, Norwood, missed the last train back to town, and remained for the night as the guest of Mr. Jones. Like Lord Lindsay, he decided to sleep on a sofa in Home's room, and thus, in his turn, became a witness of some of those tokens of spiritual presence which were received almost nightly by Home when his power was with him.

The night on which Viscount Adare shared his room at Enmore Park was a July night of the year 1868; and even after putting out the gas, so much light came through the windows that all the larger objects in the room were distinctly visible. Lord Adare could see Home when he sat up in bed, and could easily have seen any one moving about the room.

Within three minutes after their retiring to rest, a strain of music, as if from a harmonium, was heard by both, sometimes as if played loudly at a distance, and

<sup>1</sup> See "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," pp. 288, 289.

again very gently close at hand. After this music had continued for some minutes, Home left the room to ascertain whether any one in the house were playing. He returned accompanied by Mr. Jones, who was desirous to witness the phenomenon for himself; and all three listeners then heard the unearthly music. It ceased only to give place to other manifestations; the floor and sofa shook violently, loud raps came on walls, floor, sofa, &c., and sounds as of the rustling of a dress were heard, but no form was visible.

Lord Adare, who had sat down on the sofa, suddenly felt an unseen hand touch his, and at the same moment a chair close to him glided away across the room. An eyeglass which he had laid on this chair was lifted by the hand; and on his putting out his own to take it, he felt resistance, and bending forward, saw a hand and arm holding the cord attached to the glass. No more of the spirit-form was visible; but for a second or two he distinctly perceived the hand, then it vanished, and the glass was left in his hand. A moment afterwards sounds near the foot of Home's bed attracted his attention, and on looking towards the spot, "I distinctly saw a figure," he says, "standing over the foot of the bed; it held something, and I could see the hand and arm waving backwards and forwards. The figure stooped down towards Mr. Jones, and then disappeared."

A few seconds afterwards, Lord Adare, still seated on the sofa, felt a hand touch his, though no hand was visible. He caught the invisible fingers in his own, and held them for some seconds; but on his grasping them still tighter, they vanished from his grasp, only to return again, however, and stroke his hand. Still he could see nothing; but to the sense of touch the fingers seemed those of a delicately-formed human hand, and the skin felt perfectly natural and soft.

Mr. Jones asked that the chair which had previously glided across the room might be brought to him. It was too far from him and from Mr. Home for it to

have been reached by either of them by any means whatever. His wish was no sooner expressed than the chair began to move ; and there not being room for it to pass between the foot of the bed and a round table, the table was raised from the floor and moved aside, a faint, luminous appearance hovering above it the while.

Raps sounded again, and a message was spelled out —“ *We wish to give you the* ”——. Here the sounds ceased ; and though Home repeated the alphabet three or four times, the spirits remained mute. While the three recipients of this unfinished message were wondering over it, and hazarding conjectures as to its possible meaning, Lord Adare’s handkerchief was carried to him and dropped on his knees. He took it up, and found that a key was wrapped in it. At the same moment that the message was thus symbolically completed, the words—“*key to the mystery*” were rapped out. In explanation of this incident Viscount Adare mentions that he had been told earlier in the evening, that the spirits were anxious to prove to him that there was an actual intelligence at work, and that the explanation of the phenomena was not to be sought in animal magnetism.

“*Good-night*” was now spelt out, and all manifestations ceased.

Viscount Adare thoroughly satisfied himself, he says, that the phenomena could not have been due to any mechanical contrivances. Admitting, for instance, that the violent vibrations of the sofa on which he sat might have been produced by attaching machinery to it, the fact that he had himself assisted to carry up the sofa from the drawing-room, and had never left the room afterwards, sufficiently disposed of the conjecture. To have attached any mechanism to the table and chair was equally impossible ; and the chair, as already noted, was far beyond the reach of Mr. Home and Mr. Jones. Lastly, the light was sufficient for him to have seen any one moving in the room, and for him to assure

himself that it was no mortal form which he saw standing at the foot of Home's bed, and no mortal hand which touched his own.

"What wonderful séances Adare had!" wrote the late Lord Dunraven to Mr. Home in February, 1869. "I am going to have them all properly written out." A week or two later, Home accompanied Lord Adare to Adare Manor, where, and at Garinish, manifestations of the most varied and remarkable character were witnessed<sup>1</sup> by the Earl of Dunraven, Viscount Adare, Major and Mrs. Blackburn, Captain and Mrs. Wynne, &c.

"I have taken the greatest pains," wrote the Earl of Dunraven to Mr. Home, on August 8; 1869, "to contradict the idea that you called up spirits; and always say that I looked on you as a mere 'physical' machine, such as a battery and wire are, *through* which, not *by* which, communications are made—who by, being *the* question, which does not more concern you than any of us."

Beginning in November, 1867, the investigations of Lords Dunraven and Adare (recorded and unrecorded) extended over a period of several years. Viscount Adare attested in 1869 his belief that the phenomena were the result of some power or intelligence other than that of Mr. Home or any of the persons present. The late Lord Dunraven similarly declared that the larger his experience had been, and the more varied the phenomena, the firmer had become his conviction that a large portion of them were only explicable on the hypothesis that they were caused by intelligent beings other than the persons in the room. It was recorded by Viscount Adare that he had seen many persons, at their first séance with Home, make every effort to account for the phenomena by trickery and mechanical contrivance, and when satisfied that no deceit was possible and no machinery was present, attempt to reduce the manifestations to the effects of

<sup>1</sup> See "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," pp. 291-293.



some unknown force. He added that he had invariably found them, after thorough inquiry, compelled to admit that the phenomena, of which they had first refused to admit the existence and had afterwards sought to explain away the cause, could not be accounted for, except on the supposition that they were caused by an unseen, but active and reasoning, intelligence.

It hardly needs demonstrating that even physical phenomena could be of such a nature as to leave the observer no escape from that conclusion. When, for instance, the full form of a spirit was seen, it was more than difficult for the beholder to attribute such a manifestation to the "psychic force" of Mr. Home.

Viscount Adare was the witness of this manifestation on numerous occasions. One of the most remarkable of his experiences is described in my former work (pp. 290, 291), and is confirmed by the testimony of another witness present—Captain Gerard Smith. A second instance has just been given. A third occurred in August, 1868, at Viscount Adare's rooms in London. Hearing the rustling of a dress, he looked up, and saw, as did Mr. Home, the figure of a woman—the very folds of the dress being clearly visible. The form approached Home, "making as loud a rustling noise as a living woman in a heavy silk dress would do," bent over him, as if in an attitude of benediction, and vanished.

At a séance in October, 1868, with Mrs. S. C. Hall and her husband, Viscount Adare, Mr. Humphreys, and several others present saw a form standing behind Home, and a second form at the opposite side of the room. The young Duke de Pomar was, unfortunately, so startled by their appearance, that the circle had to be abruptly broken and the séance put an end to.

On November 3, 1868, Lord Adare, sleeping in the same room as Mr. Home, saw distinctly the apparition of the little son of Mr. and Mrs. Cox of Stockton House, a child of eight or ten years old, who had passed from earth a few weeks before. The figure was between the observer and the window of the bedroom, and the out-

stretched hand and arm intercepted the light as palpably as though they had been of flesh and bone.

At Garinish, a small cottage of Lord Dunraven's on the Kerry coast, a séance—the last of several that had taken place there—was held on the evening of March 13, 1869. Only the Earl of Dunraven, Viscount Adare, and Mr. Home were present. The manifestations were numerous and remarkable. Home was slightly raised in the air; an arm and hand, white, and faintly luminous, was seen by Lord Adare to rise from under the table, holding a snuff-box which he had placed on a bookcase at the farther end of the room before the séance began, to carry the box to a ledge under the window, and shake out its contents on some papers that were lying there. The hand was more distinctly defined than the arm; and the beholder could remark even the manner in which the fingers grasped the box. The hand then re-crossed the room, and, passing under the table, placed the box in its owner's hand. He distinctly felt the impression of the thumb and the tips of the fingers as this was done; the skin seemed perfectly natural, but somewhat wrinkled, giving the impression of an aged hand. A message was then rapped out explaining from whom the manifestation proceeded, and why the snuff-box had been emptied.

The three sitters presently saw a spirit-hand approach a vase that stood on the table near Lord Adare, who was seated opposite Mr. Home, and take a flower from it. After laying this on the edge of the table, the apparition vanished; but the flower, with nothing visibly touching it, moved in a series of little jerks across the table, and passed under it near Lord Dunraven, in whose hand the flower was placed by spirit-fingers. To the sense of touch nothing more than the presence of finger-tips was apparent; and although he kept his hand under the table for some little time, and was twice or thrice touched, the fingers still appeared to him quite detached from any hand, on which Mr. Home remarked, "They generally are able at first to

make only the fingers apparent." A small table then moved untouched up to that at which the three were sitting, and a miniature was taken from it by an invisible hand and laid on the table before them. Sounds were heard more than once as of a voice trying to articulate; and finally Home passed into the trance, and various communications were given, the last of which referred to a patient of Dr. Elliotson's (with whom, in the days before his séances with Home at Dieppe made the Doctor a convert, Lord Dunraven had been acquainted). "Her name is Dawson," said Home in the trance; "I cannot make out her Christian name. Harriet—Harriet; no, that is not it."

"I have a very vague recollection of a mesmeric patient named Dawson," answered Lord Dunraven, "but I don't think her name was Harriet"—the true name at the same moment recurring to his mind, but not being uttered by him.

Without any more being said on the subject, Home awoke from his trance, and the séance ended. While he was entranced, Viscount Adare had been sitting by him; and during the whole of the time that he kept his place by Home he could see, standing close to his father, a vaporous form, white and luminous. Lord Dunraven perceived nothing. In returning to his place, Lord Adare could not avoid passing right through the figure, or, rather, through the spot where it had stood; for, at the instant he approached it, it disappeared.

After the séance the three sitters went into the dining-room to supper. A call for the alphabet was presently given, and the following message was rapped out: "*Ellen Daw—*" "Ah, Ellen Dawson!" interrupted Lord Dunraven. "Ellen Dawson! Who is she?" asked Home, who had been told nothing of the communications made while he was entranced. "It is the name of a mesmeric patient of Dr. Elliotson's," replied Lord Dunraven. "You could not make out the Christian name—Ellen—in your trance."

It is expressly stated by Lord Dunraven that he had

not said a word on the subject, except that he did not think the name was Harriet. The true name had remained locked in his mind. Was it possible for Home to read it there. "Yes," a certain class of critics will answer, "for Home was skilled in thought-reading."<sup>1</sup> Then why not have turned his skill to account during the séance?

*Per contra*, it may be asked why the spirits impressed Home with a wrong name during his trance? They seem to have done so designedly, and for a sound reason. *Unknown to Home*, Lord Dunraven had said to Lord Adare in the course of the evening, that he had more confidence in names or messages given through raps than in communications made during the trance—that the latter might be accounted for on the hypothesis of mind-reading or clairvoyance. This state of mind on the part of the investigator to whom the message concerning Ellen Dawson was addressed, renders very intelligible the apparent caprice of the spirits in their manner of communicating the name.

It was very far from infrequent with them to lead up to the communication of a name or a message by preliminaries that made the token doubly convincing when it came. In the *brochure* from which I have already quoted, Mr. P. P. Alexander gives a striking instance of the kind:—

"It is vouched to me," he writes, "by a friend who was present at several of these séances" (*i.e.*, the séances held by Mr. Home in 1870, with Dr. and Mrs. Doun of Edinburgh). "I have every confidence in his veracity; and even if I considered it doubtful, an allusion to the marvel related, made by Dr. G—— in my hearing on the evening referred to in my narrative, would buttress it

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<sup>1</sup> The *Athenæum* of June 2, 1888, asserts that Home "had remarkable skill in turning to his own use all the machinery of mesmerism and thought-reading." It is as facile to make such assertions as it would be difficult to offer evidence in support of them; but one may be permitted a little surprise at finding such a critic as the *Athenæum* driven to avail itself of such weapons as "mesmerism and thought-reading" in combating the facts of Spiritualism. A little more evidence of those facts, as exemplified through Home, and the *Athenæum* will probably advance as far as a recognition of "psychic force." In the meantime, I content myself with offering all the facts obtainable, in response to the theories of my critics.

unimpeachably :—At a particular stage of the proceedings, the table began to make strange undulatory movements, and gave out, as these proceeded, a curious accompaniment of creaking sound. . . . Presently my friend remarked that—movement and sound together—it reminded him of nothing he could think of except a ship in distress, with its timbers straining in a heavy sea. The notion was discussed; and, on the whole, there was agreement in the party that it was really more like this than anything else that could be suggested. This conclusion being come to, the understood five raps were heard,<sup>1</sup> and the table proceeded to rap out, '*It is David.*' Instantly a lady present burst into tears, and cried wildly, 'Oh, that must be my poor, dear brother David, who was lost at sea some time since!' Curious this, if true. And of its truth (except as I was not myself present) I have not the smallest reason to doubt."

With the exception of Dr. and Mrs. Doun, the whole of the persons present at this, and at all the other séances held in Edinburgh, were complete strangers to Mr. Home.

"I must only crave patience if nothing should occur at the first, or even the second séance," wrote Home in responding (May, 1868) to the challenge of Professor Tyndall. An account of the gradual increase of power observed in connection with the phenomena at Adare Manor and Garinish during the months of February and March, 1869, will illustrate the reasonableness of such a stipulation<sup>2</sup> better than any words of mine.

The first séance was held at Adare on the 27th of February, 1869. The usual cold current of air passed round the circle, but vibrations, raps, and movements of the table and of the chairs of the sitters were the only physical manifestations that ensued. Another séance was held the following evening, and again the phenomena observed were few and slight. On March

<sup>1</sup> Call for the alphabet.

<sup>2</sup> "Should it be found, therefore, that this abnormal power supposed in Mr. Home is sometimes in riotous excess, at other times in nearly entire abeyance, there seems in this to be no ground for cavil, seeing its analogy in this respect is close with various other powers which, in common with ourselves, he possesses. . . . The uncertainty which besets these phenomena, however it may a little complicate the investigation of them, can thus be no good ground for declining it, seeing that by the very conditions of the case, the constancy of sequence which we postulate in a purely physical inquiry, it would here be unreasonable to expect."—*Spiritualism, &c.*, by P. P. Alexander.

1st, the manifestations increased in power. A table standing at some distance from the circle was seen to move, and a chair behind Lord Adare similarly moved up to him untouched. A lady present asked if any of her relations were in the room. "Yes," was the response. "But," she objected, with real or affected misconception of its purport, "there are no relations of mine alive here—no one in the circle is related to me." "WE are the living," was the instant answer.

This séance had been held in the afternoon; and the same evening a smaller circle was formed, consisting of Mrs. Wynne, Viscount Adare, and Mr. Home. The room was lit by a bright fire and one candle. Strong vibrations of the table and floor were felt, and sounds heard as of persons moving about the apartment—these sounds being repeated three times at the request of the sitters. Raps were heard constantly in all parts of the room. A spirit-hand formed itself under the cloth on the table, and, still covered by the cloth, approached Viscount Adare, remained for a few seconds touching him, and then disappeared. A rose was taken from his button-hole by an invisible hand and carried to Mrs. Wynne. A second flower left Home's coat, floated across the table under the eyes of the sitters, and fell close to Lord Adare. The table then rose gently from the floor, and while in the air rose and sank three times, gradually moving higher. In this manner, without ever touching the floor, it was carried by degrees to a height of three feet from the ground. "I have never," records Viscount Adare, "seen a table sustained in the air for so long a time."

Towards the close of the séance raps spelt out, "We love the symbol of faith"; and immediately afterwards the table was raised again in the air, and twice made the sign of the cross. A current of air charged with perfume, "as of dried rose-leaves and some aromatic substance," was wafted across the three sitters, and the manifestations ceased.

The next day the spirits unexpectedly made their

presence manifest. While Lord Adare was sitting in his room reading, and Mr. Home was writing near him, a round table placed beneath the window suddenly glided away from it in full daylight, moved a distance of six or eight feet, and placed itself against the table at which Home sat writing. A sound as of a bell tinkling was heard; and this was followed by a communication from the monk who subsequently made his presence manifest during the night-visit to the ruins of Adare Abbey. Viscount Adare asked the meaning of the tinkling sound as of a bell; and Home (now in the trance) answered, "He seems to have committed some crime and then to have said mass, and the crime weighed heavier on his conscience in consequence." A moment afterwards a large pair of scissors was violently dashed from off the round table to the floor—Lord Adare looking on the while, and neither he nor Home being near the table. This Irish monk, like the Gianana who appeared at Florence to Mrs. Baker, is related to have more than once manifested a remorseful aversion to the presence of anything resembling a weapon.

In the evening of this same day, March 2nd, numerous phenomena, including the apparition of spirit-hands, were witnessed by a circle consisting of Mrs. Blackburn, Miss Wynne, Viscount Adare, the Hon. F. Lawless, Captain Wynne, and Mr. Home. The séance of March 3rd was still more remarkable. While it was in progress, Lord Dunraven grasped a spirit-hand that was bringing a flower to him. It vanished, leaving the flower in his hand. Delicate raps, like a continuous stream of little electrical sparks, sounded on the table; they were scarcely audible without placing the ear close to it. Among the messages given was, "*Even should we be taken to a distant heaven, would it not be our greatest joy to fly as the—*." Here the sounds ceased, and from a chest in a recess of the window on which various objects were lying, there came an arrow, and placed itself in the hand of Lord Dunraven. The raps then commenced again, and the word

"*descends*" was spelt out, thus completing the message:—"as the arrow descends."

A sheet of paper and a pencil had been laid on the table for the purpose of taking down communications. All the four sitters present—Mrs. Wynne, the Earl of Dunraven, Viscount Adare, and Mr. Home—saw the pencil move about on the paper, as if a spirit were making an attempt to write; and Lord Adare also saw something resembling a hand grasping the pencil, but cloudy and undefined.

Equally impressive was the séance of March 4th, during which an air that, many years before, had been an especial favourite of Lord Dunraven's, was played under the circumstances narrated in a former chapter. On the same night occurred the manifestations in the ruined Abbey of Adare, which I have given as a pendant to the Florentine narrative of Mrs. Baker. Another visit was paid to the ruins on the evening of March 5th, and a shadowy form was seen by Viscount Adare. On returning, a séance was held in the picture-gallery. A piano was in the gallery, and also a covered harp. Home, in a trance, went to the piano and began playing; and while he played, all present—Mrs. Blackburn, Mrs. and Miss Wynne, Lords Dunraven and Adare, Major Blackburn, and Captain Wynne—heard the chords of the covered harp delicately and faintly swept. An accordion was played while held by the Earl of Dunraven, and a sofa moved untouched across the carpet—the heavy table, the while, advancing slowly to meet it. The séance closed with a message spelled out "by most beautiful chords upon the accordion;" and the name of God having occurred in the course of this parting greeting, it was given, "as always—most softly and reverently."

The séance of March 6th was the last at Adare. Among other phenomena, a piano rose completely from the ground, which fact Viscount Adare verified by passing his hand beneath the castors.

The evening of March 9th saw the first séance at



Garinish. Very few physical manifestations were observed. On the 11th the phenomena increased in power. A small table moved across the room untouched; little flashes of light were seen darting about the keys of an accordion, and the instrument played—first when held by Home with one hand, and then when lying on the floor untouched. This was in the light of one candle and a bright fire.

The wonderful and beautiful séance of March 12th at Garinish has been described in my former volume (pp. 291–293). In presence of the Earl of Dunraven, Viscount Adare, Major Blackburn, and Mr. Home, manifestation succeeded manifestation. Music was heard, voices were heard; and during the whole time that they sounded, relates Lord Adare, Mr. Home continued speaking, to negative the suspicion of ventriloquism; and the louder he spoke, the louder the sounds became. Spirit-hand after spirit-hand appeared—took flowers from two vases placed on the table before the sitters, brought from a table at the end of the room farthest from Home the photograph of a departed friend, and laid it before them; brought the miniature of Mrs. Home from a table behind Lord Dunraven, and laid it on the séance-table, &c. Generally the spirit-hand that grasped the moving object was plainly visible, but in one or two instances not even the faint cloud-like outline of a hand could be discerned; the sitters saw only flower, book, or portrait moving through the air. The cottage at Garinish is small, and although this séance was held by firelight only, that light was found amply sufficient to illuminate every corner of the little room in which the phenomena occurred.

From Garinish Home returned to London, where Viscount Adare was present at numerous séances with him in the months of March, April, and May, 1869. At that of March 29th a shadowy human form as of a woman was seen, and subsequently a portion of the wall to the right of Home became illumined by a light that appeared to radiate from a bright spot in the

centre. Across this luminous surface a shadowy form repeatedly passed.

On the 4th or 5th of April, Viscount Adare, while writing in Home's room, saw a chair move very slowly across the room to the table at which the two were sitting. He measured the distance which the chair had thus traversed untouched, and found it to be an inch short of nine feet.

Although the instances of second-sight that might have been chronicled in connection with Home are numerous, few of them have actually been placed on record. Perhaps the most regrettable loss of this kind is the neglect of Mrs. Milner Gibson and other witnesses to publish their testimony to an occurrence which took place at Dieppe in 1863, within a few days of the remarkable conversion of Dr. Elliotson. One of the circle had brought a crystal with him, into which he was desirous that Home should look. Taking the crystal without the least expectation that any vision would present itself, "to my astonishment," writes Home ("Incidents," vol. ii. p. 68), "I saw a crowd, and in the crowd a man who was assassinated, in the act of falling forward from his chair. I said, 'That is Abraham Lincoln, and within the year he will be assassinated.'<sup>1</sup>

"I do not attempt to explain these things; I can only give the facts."

Viscount Adare was witness to an instance of second-sight on the evening of April 6, 1869, and although the incident was unimportant, the facts are sufficiently curious to be related. Shortly before eleven that night, he returned to Ashley House, where both he and Home were staying, and found the latter ill in bed. Home passed presently into a trance, "and turning to me, and speaking in a firm, loud voice," related Viscount Adare, "said, 'The poor little dog has gone.'"

The listener asked, "What dog?" and Home, still

<sup>1</sup> "Within the year" did not, however, prove quite accurate. The limit of time always presents a difficulty to the spirits.

in the trance, replied that it was a small white dog belonging to Mrs. S. C. Hall. "She has gone just now," he added.

"Home, I believe, knew that the dog was ill," says Lord Adare, "but could not have heard of its death, which took place between ten and eleven o'clock. I had no idea that the dog was even ill."

The conversation that followed will perhaps be more interesting to the reader than the incident itself.

Home continued :—"She has passed from earth, but is not destroyed ; she is like a little spark of electricity—a small globe of light : it is moving on ; in time it will come into contact with some other substance and be absorbed."

"Absorbed into what ?" asked Viscount Adare.

"Into some higher form of animal life. It has no sensation or consciousness now ; its condition of being, its organisation, was not sufficiently high to permit of its retaining its individuality."

Viscount Adare asked whether there were not animals in the other world, and whether any of them had ever existed here ?

Still in the trance, Home replied that there could be no beauty without variety, and variety existed in the spirit-world, as on earth. "But," he added, "I do not say that the animals in the next world ever existed on earth ; it does not seem to me that they did. I only know that they are there, and I see that the life of animals upon earth is eventually absorbed into other forms. I do not know that your animals ever continue to exist in the spirit-world."

The Earl of Dunraven came to London in the summer of 1869, and was present at séances held during the months of June and July at Sir Robert Gore Booth's residence in Buckingham Gate. Mrs. Honynwood, who was also present on three of these occasions, took notes at the time of the manifestations observed, and has kindly forwarded them to me. I append to her narrative the account given by Captain Gerard Smith

of the apparition of spirit-forms at one of the séances in Buckingham Gate:—

“On Saturday, June 25, 1869,” records Mrs. Honywood, “Lord Dunraven kindly invited me to a séance at No. 7, Buckingham Gate—Sir R. Gore Booth’s. I met also Miss Gore Booth (who, being an invalid, reclined on a low couch at one side of the table) two other ladies, Mr. Arthur Smith Barry, and Mr. Home. We sat at an ordinary tea-table with two flaps. There was a lamp with a shade on another table.

“After a short time we felt vibrations in our chairs, the floor, and the table at which we sat, and Miss Gore Booth also felt them in her couch; then came raps in various quarters. The table rose slightly, and moved up close to the couch. Miss Gore Booth was repeatedly touched, and Lord Dunraven and Sir R. Gore Booth had a similar experience. On Mr. Home remarking that all the influence seemed on one side of the table, raps replied, ‘*We are obliged to keep to this side*’—i.e., that on which Miss Gore Booth was placed, opposite to the two young ladies, Miss R—— and Miss P——, who were present for the first time at a séance.

“Mr. Home then proposed that the white cloth should be replaced on the table, in case hands came, as we might see them move under the cloth. This was done, and an accordion was also fetched by Mr. Smith Barry and placed on the table. Movements like those of hands were presently seen under the cloth, near Miss Gore Booth, Mr. Home’s hands resting on the table the while, in full view. He now took the accordion and held it in one hand at the under edge of the table. A sort of prelude was played, and then notes indicating letters of the alphabet spelt out, ‘*There is spiritual discord—we pray for harmony.*’ The word discord was expressed by a most discordant note being played, while harmony was indicated by soft, beautiful chords. At the request of Mr. Home, Mr. Smith Barry and the two young ladies looked under the table from time to time and saw the instrument moving up and down. Five notes now called for the alphabet, and we received the following message: ‘*An undeveloped influence prevents our—*’ here a break occurred—‘*but with prayer, earnest prayer, we will dispel it,*’ was shortly added.”

While Mr. Home still sat holding the accordion, his chair was turned round, and slight movements of the table and of Miss Gore Booth’s couch also took place.

“Five notes were then struck, and the following message given to Mr. Home:—‘*We wish to convince an undeveloped spirit that you could not trick, even if you wished to do so.*’”

Mr. Home could not understand this message, the

meaning of which was, however, instantly comprehended by Mrs. Honeywood and another sitter, Lord Dunraven.

"Mr. Home," says the latter, "expressed the greatest wonder what this could mean. '*Convince a spirit!*'" he said; 'I cannot understand it at all.' I said, 'Ask if any one else understands what this message signifies?' He pointed to each of us, and when his hand was directed to me and Mrs. Honeywood, three raps were given."

Why the two sitters in question were indicated will be presently shown. I resume Mrs. Honeywood's narrative:—

"Mr. Home expressing much surprise at the message, Lord Dunraven asked whether any one else understood it; and on Mr. Home pointing to us all in turn, three raps indicated Lord D., and three more myself.

"Again hands showed themselves and touches were felt. The accordion was now moved towards the head of Miss Gore Booth's couch, until Mr. Home's arm was stretched out to its full extent, the instrument being extended level with his arm. In this horizontal position it was sounded from time to time; then, resting on the edge of the couch, it played there, and presently was brought back across the table and carried under it. Mr. Home left it on the floor, and we felt it moving about under the table. It touched Lord Dunraven and others of us.

"Mr. Home now passed into a trance, and going to Miss Gore Booth's couch, knelt as if in prayer, then made passes down her arms. Approaching Miss R——, he stood behind her chair, and spoke to this effect:—'That a home was opened for the souls of men, but through sin it was closed and sealed—that from the moment a man was born, the door of heaven was closed upon him for a time; but that he was given a golden key by which to unlock the golden gate and enter in. That the key is prayer, through which means our spirits force their way before the seat of God. That Spiritualism is no subject for idle curiosity, but for steadfast pursuit.' He ended by saying, 'There is much we would see altered; you must pray—do not doubt; it will be done. Only pray, and all will come right.' Turning to me he whispered, 'Your father is here; he says you have been troubled lately; but all will be made smooth—never fear.' To Lord Dunraven he said with emphasis, 'You know well who was playing;' and sitting down, awoke from his trance.

"After breaking up the séance and going into the dining-room, two chairs advanced to the table between Mr. Home and Mr. Smith Barry, traversing a distance of five or six feet. This was seen by all present."

An explanation was subsequently given by the Earl of Dunraven of the incidents in this séance that were incomprehensible to Mr. Home, and that, without such explanation, would be equally perplexing to the reader.

A few days before the séance, Lord Dunraven had seen messages written down, at the doubtful dictation of a supposed spirit, by a young lady who was a total stranger to Mr. Home, Miss R——. On obtaining the permission of the presumed spirit to put a few questions, Lord Dunraven asked, "What do you think of Mr. Home?" Through the ready hand of Miss R—— the answer came promptly, "He has a certain degree of power, but a vast amount of trickery;" and, on an explanation of this charge being pressed for, the ingenuous invisible declared, "He deceives people by pretending to call up the spirits of their friends." The "spirit" was evidently as ignorant as if it had been a French journalist of the fact that Home had no power to evoke particular spirits, and never in his life called for the departed friends of those who sat with him to present themselves at a séance. They came, or did not come, in response to no will or wish of his.

Knowing that Miss R—— had never seen Mr. Home, Lord Dunraven asked her if she would like to come to a séance with him. She expressed the greatest eagerness to be present; and, accordingly, Lord Dunraven invited her to the séance just described — "expecting," he says, "that something curious would probably occur." He mentioned the circumstance of the invitation to Mrs. Honynwood only; and he adds (and Mrs. Honynwood confirms) that neither of them said a word to Mr. Home on the subject, and that when Miss R—— presented herself at the séance, Home had no idea who she was.

The purport of the various communications recorded by Mrs. Honynwood and the Earl of Dunraven will now be clear to the reader. "*We are obliged to keep to this side,*" ran the first message—*i.e.*, to the side opposite Miss R——. "*There is spiritual discord,*" was the

next declaration; "*we pray for harmony.*" Then came the words about "*an undeveloped influence,*" and the remarkable message addressed to Home which so perplexed him. "Ask if any one else understands what it signifies," suggested the Earl of Dunraven; and the spirits promptly indicated himself and Mrs. Honywood.

The most notable feature of the whole incident is that the libel on Mr. Home recorded above was written through the hand of a total stranger to him, who had seen nothing whatever of his séances when the "message" was given. Lord Dunraven charitably assumed that some malicious and untruthful spirit was responsible for its tenor. "These answers," he says, "made me think that this was probably a deceitful spirit." The various incidents of the séance at Sir R. Gore Booth's appear to have confirmed his lordship in this opinion; and after describing them in the same manner as Mrs. Honywood and recording the communications received, he adds: "The messages were, so to say, supplemented by the beautiful and pointed address uttered by Mr. Home when in a trance, standing behind Miss R——'s chair."

I have dwelt on this incident because it illustrates a peculiar form of calumny by which Home was from time to time assailed. The perversity of "undeveloped spirits" is such, that persons who had never seen him, but who had heard idle talk and baseless fictions concerning him, would take pen or pencil, and, in presence of admiring friends who believed them to be in genuine communication with the other world, would write down as "spirit-messages" the most grotesque statements and calumnious untruths concerning Spiritualism and Home. Unknown to Mr. Browning, "undeveloped influences" of this class were doubtless largely responsible for the production of "Mr. Sludge, the Medium."

But "spirits" of the class that communicated through the hand of Miss R—— pass like the empty shadows that they are, and the facts of Home's life remain.

## CHAPTER X.

## SÉANCES OF 1868-1870.

A FEW days after the séance just narrated, another was held at the residence of Sir R. Gore Booth, of which Mrs. Honywood sends me the following account :—

“The Duchess of St. Albans, Lady Diana B——, Mrs. Stopford, Mrs. Egerton, Miss Gore Booth, Lord Dunraven, Sir R. Gore Booth, Mr. Smith Barry, Mr. Home, and myself, formed the circle.

“The vibrations and raps began very quickly, and with great power. Lord Dunraven recognised Dr. Elliotson’s raps, and on asking if he were present, received most powerful affirmative raps. A drawer then opened, startling Lady Diana, who was opposite it. This phenomenon was several times repeated, the drawer opening and closing of itself. Loud rumbling noises and a kind of rattling vibration were heard inside the drawer when closed.

“Mr. Home held the accordion with one hand under the table,<sup>1</sup> and on its beginning to play, Lady Diana and Mrs. Stopford both looked under the table from time to time, and saw the accordion expanding and contracting, the hand with which Mr. Home held it being motionless, and his other hand resting on the table. The Duchess of St. Albans then held it with Mr. Home, and on his withdrawing his hand it continued to play. Notes were sounded, chords struck, and airs delicately played, while the Duchess alone held it.”

Lord Dunraven records that, before taking the instrument, the Duchess asked for “Home, Sweet Home,” and that the air was played.

“Lord Dunraven,” continues Mrs. Honywood, “asked if the music were from the same spirit that had played the other night; and notes sounded on the accordion responded, ‘*A rude imitation only.*’ Presently there was spelt out, ‘*All present are loving friends and messengers from God,*’ the word God being given by slow, soft

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<sup>1</sup> The instrument being held, as always, bottom upwards, by the end not furnished with keys.



chords. Lord D. then asked if they would play the same air as at Adare, but no reply was given at the moment.

"We now perceived the presence of spirit-hands, though the actual hands were only visible to Mr. Home. The Duchess's scarf was pulled, and several of us were touched. Something white passed over the Duchess's shoulder, and fell on the table before her. This proved to be Lord Dunraven's pencil, which had dropped from his hand just before, while he was writing, and fallen to the ground. He was sitting at the side of the table opposite the Duchess.

"The accordion now moved away from Mr. Home under the table, rested on my foot for some seconds, and then passed on to Lord Dunraven—raps and vibrations continuing the while, and the touch of unseen hands being felt. Lady Diana, looking under the table, exclaimed, 'I see something white holding the accordion—like a cloud.' 'It is a hand, then,' said Mr. Home; 'do not look any more till it forms.'

"Several of us were now touched, and Mrs. Egerton said that a hand was distinctly placed in hers. Her silk dress was pulled and audibly rustled; and Lord Dunraven, Lady Diana, and the Duchess were touched in turn. My dress was pulled, and I could feel the accordion again moving about. It rose, and placed itself in Lord Dunraven's hand, but did not play. On Mr. Home taking it from him, the notes sounded, and the message, '*One who watches over you,*' was spelt out. Then '*Oft in the Stilly Night*' was delicately and softly played, with long-sustained notes. This was the air that Lord D. had heard at Adare, and had asked for earlier in the séance. He added that he was not thinking of it when it came.

"Mr. Home now passed into a trance, and handed me a handkerchief with which to blindfold him. He walked about the room, then came behind us, one after the other, and held his hands over our heads. He then knelt by Miss Gore Booth, apparently in prayer, and afterwards made passes down her arms. A communication to Lady Diana followed, and he also said to Mrs. Egerton that the spirit of Arthur (her husband) was standing behind her. Shortly afterwards he awoke; and after waiting a little while without the occurrence of further manifestations, we left the table.

"B. HONYWOOD."

"The variety of raps," says the Éarl of Dunraven, "and the strength and frequency of the vibrations at this séance were remarkable. The principal object aimed at appeared to be to convince the Duchess and Lady D——, by the physical manifestations, of the reality of some invisible power."

On July 7, 1869, a third circle was formed at 7, Buckingham Gate. It consisted of the Dowager

Duchess of St. Albans, Lady —, Mrs. Honynwood, Mrs. Stopford, Miss Gore Booth, the Earl of Dunraven, Sir R. G. Booth, Captain Gerard Smith, and Mr. Home. The table was without a cloth; and the room was lighted, as on the two previous occasions, by a lamp. Among other phenomena witnessed, an accordion played untouched by Mr. Home, and a luminous appearance formed above a sheet of paper that had been placed on the table before the sitters, for communications to be written down. "The table," records Lord Dunraven, "was then inclined almost vertically, but the paper did not move."

One of the circle, Mrs. Stopford, was obliged to leave before the close of the séance. She had pushed back her chair on rising; and shortly afterwards it was seen by the eight remaining sitters to move slowly up to the table, untouched by any mortal hand present. "Captain Smith," relates the Earl of Dunraven, "said he saw a form move it and then sit in it. Three notes, for 'Yes,' were sounded by the accordion."

Captain Gerard Smith's own description of what he observed is as follows:—

"Quite at the beginning of the séance I saw an object without apparent form move near Lord Dunraven under the table, and approach Miss Gore Booth. Home said, 'I think they are trying to form hands.' The answer 'Yes' was faintly rapped out.

"Previous to Mrs. Stopford leaving the room I had seen a tall spirit-form, sometimes standing against the window nearest the door, sometimes sitting in an arm-chair between the window and door. The impression made on my mind was that, for some good reason, he was prevented from entering the circle. When Mrs. Stopford left the room, the large table in the centre, covered with flowers and books, moved twice, each time nearer Mr. Home and the Duchess; and on each occasion he moved his arm-chair too. I think no one saw this latter movement but myself. It was then, as if to frustrate any further attempts on his part to enter the circle, that Mrs. Stopford's chair was taken by a spirit (in appearance like a pillar of cloud) and moved up to the table."

The sceptic will treat as illusions the forms seen by Captain Smith, but the Spiritualist is aware that his experience has been paralleled at many séances with

Home; and that, as regards the movements of chairs, &c., untouched, while one person would see nothing but the moving object, a second would see a cloudy hand hovering over it, and a third, like Captain Smith, the full form of the spirit present. Thus, at Viscount Adare's first séance with Mr. Home (in November, 1867, at Malvern):—

"A chair that was standing against the wall, at a distance of perhaps five yards, came suddenly and quickly out from the wall," says Lord Adare, "and placed itself beside me at the table. The effect was startling. Mrs. Thayer said, 'She could see a shadowy form standing between Home and me.' I saw nothing, but I was touched lightly on the head, and distinctly, as with a sharp tap of the finger, on the knee. I do not think it possible that anybody at the table could have touched me. I could see all their hands; and had it been done by a foot, I must have perceived the difference of touch, and have seen the motion."

In August, 1868, Mr. Home was staying with Viscount Adare at the rooms of the latter in London. On the night when music, as of an organ and the chant of spirit-voices, was heard there,<sup>1</sup> forms were visible—at times to both observers, at times to only one. "We both saw as it were a luminous cloud about the middle of the room, over the table," records Viscount Adare, "and another luminous cloud-like body floating in the air. Occasionally, I saw a luminous form standing at the foot of Home's bed, which he did not see; and he at one time saw a similar appearance at the foot of mine, which I failed to perceive. We distinctly heard the rustling of a silk dress moving about the room."

The levitation of Home at Ashley House, on December 16, 1868, when he floated out of one window and in at another, as attested by the three witnesses present, Lords Lindsay and Adare, and Captain C. Wynne (see my former work, pp. 299-307), was preceded by the apparition of various spirit-forms which were visible only to Lord Lindsay. "Lindsay saw spirits in different places," says Viscount Adare. "A chair moved of itself from the wall up to the table between Home

<sup>1</sup> See "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," p. 294.

and Wynne. Wynne said he could feel that there was some one there, but he saw nothing. Lindsay perceived the figure in the chair, and said that he was leaning his arm on Wynne's shoulder."

Several of the séances at which Viscount Adare was present were held in Mrs. Hennings' house at Norwood.<sup>1</sup> On these occasions the circle usually included Mrs. Scott Russell, wife of the well-known engineer of that name. This lady not only witnessed many remarkable phenomena, but was the recipient of communications which converted her from incredulity to a full and firm belief in Spiritualism. Writing to Mr. Home, some years after the séances at Norwood, she tells him:—

"Mrs. Hennings, whom we both love, always reads to me your letters. She knows what pleasure it gives me to hear of you, and to talk of you, and to receive the kind message you always send me. . . . It was through you that I was given the faith that sustains me. But for you, all would be a darkness of Egypt that would be hourly felt, weighing like a cross.—Your attached friend,  
HARRIETTE SCOTT RUSSELL."

None of Mrs. Scott Russell's experiences have been given to the world.

I have frequently referred to the fact that Home imposed no conditions on those present at his séances, and I have cited the testimony of hundreds of witnesses that he gave every facility for investigation. All that he asked from the inquirer was to bring a little patience with him to the séance. When the power was strong, even that virtue was not essential on the part of a sceptic. Mr. Buckle, Dr. Elliotson, Mr. Varley, Dr. Robert Chambers, and hosts of others witnessed marvellous phenomena at their very first séance. *Per contra*, if Home's power were weak at the moment or in abeyance, the first, the second, even the third or fourth séance might be a total failure. His will being powerless in the matter, he could never promise that

<sup>1</sup> See my previous work, pp. 278, 279, for Mrs. Hennings' evidence.

manifestations should take place. Experience showed that, although the mortals present at a séance could do nothing to aid the spirits in establishing communication, they might unwittingly do much to interfere with them in their difficult and delicate task. When the power was strong, the phenomena occurred in spite of all obstacles; when it was weak, they frequently failed to occur. To reproach the spirits or Home with that failure was as reasonable as it would be to revolt against the operation of the natural laws to which we are subject, seeing that this power gives evidence of being subject to laws unknown to us. Yet such is the sweet reasonableness of the modern scientific mind, that from the fact of Home's inability to produce manifestations at will, the world of science drew the conclusion that the phenomena did not exist! It was declared of certain English Spiritualists by an eminent Professor of Physics, "that many dogs have the power of coming to more logical conclusions." In the conclusions evolved by very scientific thinkers out of their profound ignorance of the nature of Home's gift, Spiritualists will find much to justify them in returning the compliment to the men of science.

The failure of a séance was often due to Home's ill-health. As every physical manifestation involved a certain drain on his vital force, the spirits commonly refrained from the production of phenomena when that force was at a low ebb. Another source of failure was the interfering influence which the experience of numerous séances showed to be exerted by an excited, intense desire on the part of the sitters to witness manifestations. So very far was Home from prefacing a séance by anything resembling an invocation, that he invariably requested the persons present to engage in conversation on whatever topics might come to hand, and to detach their minds as far as possible from the expectation that anything was about to happen.

Although manifestations repeatedly occurred when no séance was being held, the abrupt breaking of the

circle, especially at the commencement of a séance, was liable to put a temporary stop to the phenomena.

"I have noticed," wrote Viscount Adare, after having been present at very many séances with Home—

"1st. That the commencement of each séance appears the same, namely, currents of cold air passing over the hands of those at the table, as if some sort of chain was being formed. Any abrupt breaking of this by some one suddenly leaving the table will stop the phenomena.

"2nd. That if the attention be too much concentrated, it prevents the phenomena. They take place best when those at the table are keeping up a general conversation. If anything occurs, such as a table moving, and everybody stops talking and looks at it, it is almost sure to stop. . . . I think that as negative a condition of mind as can possibly be maintained is almost a necessity to ensure strong manifestations."

The observation of Viscount Adare, that manifestations were heralded by a current of cold air blowing over the hands of the sitters, has been corroborated by thousands of other investigators. The rule had its exceptions, however; manifestations occasionally occurred at séances without this preliminary phenomenon having been remarked.

Vibrations of table, floor, &c., commonly followed these icy currents of air, and raps succeeded the vibrations. Nothing could be more varied than these sounds; they differed in character and in loudness with every spirit who produced them. Viscount Adare, for instance, was a listener to hundreds of different kinds of detonations, ranging from "delicate little ticks, like electric sparks going off," to the "raps as loud as if they had been caused by some one striking with a hammer," that were heard at Adare in March, 1869.

Almost as varied as the sounds by which spirits delivered their messages to the ear were the sights that manifested their presence to the eye. Sometimes, though rarely, the full form was distinctly visible. I have cited in both this and my previous volume the testimony of various witnesses of such apparitions. More commonly, the spirit seeking to render its presence visible could only shape forth an arm, a hand, or

possibly no more than the indistinct presentment of two or three fingers. Of these phenomena—the spirit-hands that rendered themselves visible, that could clasp the hands of the mortals present, detach a flower from a dress and carry it from person to person, and yet that melted back into air in the grasp of those who sought to retain them, I have adduced such abundant evidence in my former work, and have supplemented it so extensively in this, that I may well declare, in the words of Professor Challis :—“Either the facts must be admitted to be such as are reported, or the possibility of certifying facts by human testimony must be given up.”

In manifesting their presence to the eye, the spirits did not—perhaps, could not—always produce on it the impression of a form or of a hand. At times, nothing was seen but a formless, luminous appearance that thickened out of the air, or a star that shone forth, or flashes of light that darted to and fro. Thus, at Stockton House, in October, 1868, Home, in a trance, carried the lamp out of the room, saying that a manifestation was about to take place which could only be observed in the dark. Viscount Adare, Mrs. Cox, and others were present. “We presently saw a brilliant little star,” records the former, “which flitted about with an uncertain motion—sometimes approaching, sometimes receding from us. We heard raps come from the star, which flashed like an electric spark at each detonation.” At Norwood, in November, 1867, the same observer saw flitting about “a small luminous ball, sometimes very brilliant.” At Homburg, in August, 1868, Home said, “There is a spirit standing in the corner of the room; can you not see it?” Viscount Adare, to whom the question was addressed, looked, but could distinguish nothing. Suddenly, however, “the light in the corner shone out,” he relates, “like a flash of lightning. It was an instantaneous, perfectly bright flash of light, lasting, perhaps, nearly a second.” In October, 1868, while Mr. Home was staying at Viscount Adare’s rooms in

London, they both saw, during the night, "the most beautiful little phosphorescent lights moving. Sometimes," says Lord Adare, "there were two together, like eyes; sometimes two would come together, and then dart away again from each other."

At Malvern, in October, 1867, Dr. Gully, Mr. Home, and several other persons were assembled one evening in the Doctor's library, when loud rappings and movements of furniture occurred, although no séance was in progress. Some one present suggested removing the candles, to try whether further manifestations would take place. This was done, but in order that the party might not be plunged in darkness, the library door was left half open, and a broad stream of light entered the room from the gas-lit hall outside. In a letter to *Human Nature*, one of the persons present, Mr. H. D. Jencken, thus described the phenomena that ensued:—

"The opening of the half-closed door was suddenly darkened by an invisible agency, the room becoming pitch dark. Then the wall opposite became illumined, the library being now lit up by a luminous element, for it cannot be described otherwise. Between those present and the opposite and now illumined wall, two spirit-forms were seen. The forms moved to and fro, and made an effort to speak. The articulation, however, was too imperfect to permit of the meaning of the words being understood. The darkness which had obscured the half-closed door was then removed, and the broad light from the hall-lamp reappeared, looking quite dim in comparison with the brilliancy of the light that had passed away. Again the room became darkened, then illumined, the library door remaining half open all the while. . . . The time occupied by these phenomena was perhaps five to ten minutes."

At Malvern, about the same time, Dr. Gully and Mr. Jencken saw a jet of light cross the room, after which there appeared a brilliantly-luminous disc, followed by a column of light which moved towards the three sitters at the table. "The luminous column," says Mr. Jencken, "appeared to me to be from five to six feet high; the subdued, soft light mounting from it half illumined the room."



In the second volume of the "Incidents," Mr. H. T. Humphreys records that, at a séance with Mr. Home in the house of the Halls, there was beheld—

"A semi-luminous appearance, which assumed the outline of a face with two star-like eyes." This vanishing, there presently appeared, "a crown shaped like a Greek patera. Tendrils and outlines of leaves were plainly visible, the leaves being vine-shaped, appearing to hang from the edges of the broad patera. . . . It was gently carried towards those present, as though for their inspection, and then removed into the angle of the door, where it remained luminously visible for four or five minutes—visible as though it were from its own intrinsic light. The brilliancy of its star-like form had so deeply impressed all present, that after its disappearance they continued to gaze at the place where the beautiful luminous crown had been, unable to realise its disappearance.

"I have been careful," adds Mr. Humphreys, "to set down nothing save what I can most clearly and distinctly depose to."

On the 23rd of November, 1868, Viscount Adare, the Master of Lindsay, and Mr. Home, met at Home's rooms in London. The three sat down at a table, the room being nearly dark. Passing into a trance, Home poured out a glass of brandy, "and holding the glass with the brandy in it above his head, between us and the window, so that we could see it," records Lord Adare, "he was lifted off the floor about four or five feet. While in the air, we saw a bright light in the glass."

After this levitation, Home, still entranced, began speaking of the terrible evils wrought by the misuse of alcohol. "It is, under certain circumstances, a demon and real devil," he said; "though, if properly used, most beneficial."

"As he said this," relates Viscount Adare, "the light became visible again in the glass, and he was again raised in the air. 'But,' he added, 'if improperly used it becomes so' (the light disappeared), 'and drags you down, down, lower and lower,' and as he spoke he sank gradually down till he touched the floor with the glass."

These, at the moment, incomprehensible manifestations were presently explained. A noise as of a horse

galloping was heard in the room, and recalled to Viscount Adare the fact that, at a previous séance, the same sounds had preceded a communication from a spirit whose departure from earth had not long before taken place, under painful and even tragic circumstances, after a short career of devotion to the turf. Home, still in the trance, now proceeded to describe this spirit (whose story was quite unknown to him, and whom he had never met on earth), and referred to the faults of his life, and to the circumstances that attended its close.

"I asked questions," says Viscount Adare, "and received answers giving me much information as to the cause of this spirit being unhappy. Home mentioned facts that I knew to be accurate, thus affording a satisfactory test of identity; but, it being undesirable that the identity should in this case be known, I refrain from mentioning what passed."

It will probably have been noticed by the reader that it was not uncommon for a manifestation to be at the same time a symbol or an allegory, the meaning of which was in most instances readily appreciated, but occasionally passed unperceived by the witnesses of the phenomenon. I have now to give the history of a curious and beautiful little parable that was not read at the moment of its occurrence.

On December 26, 1868, there met for a séance Viscount Adare, the Master of Lindsay, Captain C. Wynne, and Captain Gerard Smith. Home, while entranced, took the half of a freshly-cut lemon, and handed it to each of the sitters to taste; then, holding it above his head, said, "We" (*i.e.*, the spirits speaking through him) "will withdraw all the acid flavour from it." As he spoke, the four witnesses saw the lemon surrounded by a yellowish light; and on again tasting it, they found that all odour was gone from the fruit, and that its acid flavour was replaced by "a sort of mawkish alkali," described by some as resembling magnesia, and by others as like ordinary soda. Home once more held

the lemon above his head, and this time a rose-coloured flame or light was seen playing over it. In a few seconds he gave it again to the party to taste, and they found it "quite good and fresh, all the natural scent and flavour having been restored to it.

Some weeks later, at another séance, Captain Smith recurred to the subject of this spiritual chemistry. "He began talking to me," records Viscount Adare, "about the séance in which the lemon was used, and said that he had been thinking deeply over it, and believed that there was an allegorical meaning attached to it."

Home, who was in the trance at the moment, answered Captain Smith's declaration of his conjecture. "Yes," said the spirits through him, "there is; and in many things that we do we frequently symbolise, and are content to know that you will, by thinking for yourselves, find out the meaning. We sometimes also do things, the meaning or object of which we ourselves do not know; we have our impulses as you have. What meaning do you attach to the story of the lemon?"

The reply of Captain Smith was chronicled by Lord Adare:—

"I consider the lemon," he said, "to have represented human nature, and the yellow flame that surrounded it our evil passions. The yellow flame devoured and destroyed all that was good in the lemon, the juice and the fragrance—representing all that is good in human nature—and it left the lemon vile and worthless. The red flame that then covered the lemon and restored it to its former excellence represented the Holy Spirit of God, by which alone our human nature, debased and destroyed by evil passions, can be restored to its natural purity and beauty."

"Home appeared much pleased," continues Lord Adare. "'Yes,' he said, 'you have read the parable aright: the yellow flame was the fire of evil passions, and the pure, bright, red flame typified the Spirit of God.'"

The circumstances under which Captain Smith's reading of the parable was given are sufficiently remarkable to merit notice. There had been no intention of holding a séance that evening, and no one but Captain Smith himself knew that he intended to call on

Home. While Viscount Adare and Dr. Gully were with Mr. Home and he was sitting by the fire talking to them, he gradually went into a trance. "He then said that Captain Smith was coming," relates Lord Adare, "and that he had just then left his house. He became rather impatient at his not coming quicker; he was aware when he did arrive, and told me to go out and meet him, which I did, informing him that Home was in a trance."

Still entranced, Home led the way to an adjoining room, and a séance was held there. After various manifestations had occurred, he rose and placed himself before the window, saying, "Sacha will try to make herself visible to you." The faint light that entered by the window showed presently to the three watchers another form growing into distinctness beside his own—that of Mrs. Home. "Her form gradually became apparent to us," wrote Lord Adare. "She stood beside him against the window, intercepting the light as a solid body, and appeared fully as material as Home himself; no one could have told which was the mortal body and which the spirit."

"The spirit," attested Captain Smith, "rested both hands on his outstretched arm, looking up into his face. From the position in which I sat, the profile of the face was perfectly visible to me; and when the two faces approached each other to kiss, there was no apparent difference in the degree of density of the two figures."

Another remarkable instance of the apparition of a spirit-form is furnished to me by Mrs. Honynwood, who received the particulars from the principal witness of the manifestation. At a subsequent séance at which the lady in question—a Mrs. Wiseman—was present, the fact of her vision and the manner in which a conviction of its reality had been impressed on her were recalled to her by messages given under the following circumstances :—

"On the 26th of April, 1870," writes Mrs. Honynwood, "the

following party assembled at my house to meet Mr. Home :—Mr. and Mrs. Martin Smith, Mrs. Egerton, Captain Smith, Mrs. Wiseman, General Brownrigg, and Mr. Peele.

"We sat at a round table in the front room, with a reading-lamp on the table and a brilliant Brighton lamp in the back-room communicating with that where we were seated. In about ten minutes we felt the table and floor vibrate; then raps came on table, floor, and chairs, making the chimney and the green china shade of the lamp vibrate. We were all of us touched, and the silk dresses of the ladies were rustled and pulled.

"Mr. Home took the accordion, and a few chords were sounded. He then passed it to Mr. Smith, who held it by the strap, while the keys rested on my foot. In this position it was gently sounded, and a few chords were played, the instrument touching my foot gently each time it was drawn out; a fact which furnishes a good test to those who assert that the accordion is played by Mr. Home's feet. It was then passed back to Mr. Home and slightly sounded, with a tremolo movement.

"Raps now sounded powerfully on the table; and by notes on the accordion the message was given, '*You have forgotten to pray.*' 'It is true,' said Mr. Home at once: 'I did forget to pray—I was talking when we sat down.' We all offered up a silent prayer, and remained quiet for a few moments. Messages were then given:—'*Pray for God's forgiveness for our shortcomings, and His continued blessings for all mankind.*'—'*Prayer will ever protect from untoward influences.*' 'You see,' I remarked, 'they never use the word *evil.*' Three powerful raps signified assent.

"Raps began a musical measure; and following the time, I perceived that they indicated my father's favourite air, 'A southerly wind and a cloudy sky.' I asked, 'Is it my father's influence?' and three loud raps responded."

At this point Mr. Martin Smith remarked that he had been touched on the knee several times. A fan was carried under the table to Mr. Smith, then gently taken from him and carried round the circle, and finally placed in Mrs. Smith's hand.

"Raps spelt out, 'It was Edith did it, Mama,'" writes Mrs. Honeywood. "Mr. Smith said, 'I am sure they are doing everything they can in the light because they know I dislike a dark séance;' the reply was, '*Yes.*' A curious sound was now heard. Mr. Home said it sounded to him like the laughter of children's voices: others said that it seemed to them like the note of a bird or the rustling of wings. It was clearest and loudest while Mr. Home was speaking. There were different tones, and the sounds swelled and died away. Mr. Home repeated, 'It is the voice of children; they are laughing merrily.' Raps responded, '*We enjoy*

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*it as much as you do.* It was added that they had played the accordion in Mr. Smith's hand because he had not this manifestation a few nights previously. 'I knew they would do all they could to convince me,' he replied. As he spoke, powerful raps were heard all over the table, and the accordion again sounded. '*This is Samuel,*' was spelt out. 'What Samuel?' asked Mr. Smith. '*Your great-uncle, your grandfather's brother.*'

"The table now rose on one side, until the top formed an inclined plane at an angle of about  $75^{\circ}$ ; but the lamp on it remained undisturbed in its place. Mr. Home requested Mr. Smith to go under the table and listen to the raps, which continued while he knelt down and listened. Mr. Home's chair was moved back and slightly raised from the floor, and Mr. Home himself was slightly raised from his chair. A sofa was moved forward to his chair; then both chair and sofa were drawn back. Rising, and replacing his chair at the table, he said, 'There is a man standing by the sofa.' It moved up quietly and quickly as he spoke, and placed itself between Mr. Home and Mrs. Egerton.

"Mr. Home now passed into a trance. He walked round the circle, touched Mr. Peele, and said, 'It was Isaac'; then approached Mrs. Wiseman and said to her, 'You have not kept the statuette: you ought to have done so.' 'No,' she answered, 'I have not.' 'You must try to get it again; I scratched my initials on the broken arm. You must get it, Lydia.' Then, as he moved away, he added, 'Ever so much more sunlight now.' Mrs. Wiseman, 'I am glad to hear you say so.' 'Yes, more light—much more light.'

"These messages refer to a remarkable séance in Scotland which Mrs. Wiseman had with Mr. Home. While they sat at the table, he desired her to look at a spirit standing near a small statuette in the room. Mrs. Wiseman did so, and saw the dark figure of a man. Doubts crossed her mind as to the reality of the form; she wondered whether she actually saw a spirit, or if she were biologised. As if to answer her thought and solve her doubts, the spirit-form raised one hand and struck the plaster statuette on the arm, which broke and fell on the ground—thus forcibly answering her doubts, and proving the presence of intelligence and force.

"Mr. Home now passed to Mr. Smith, and said, 'There is a very peculiar spirit here, with a very strange manner; your father would recognise him.' Mr. Smith seemed to recognise the description, and answered, 'I am sorry I ever said unkind things about him.' Home went on: 'You must not blame people because they have acted otherwise than you thought they ought to act. Spirits suffer far more from remorse and the stings of conscience than you fully realise. Remember that the actions of your daily life leave their impress on the soul, like the mason's chisel on the granite after the blow of the hammer. That is what causes suffering—nothing else—nothing else!'"

Still in the trance, Home now turned from Mr. Smith

to others of the circle, and various communications were made to them, of which Mrs. Honeywood took notes as far as was in her power. Thus, after referring to the manifestations that had been particularly directed to Mr. Martin Smith, Home, turning to a lady present, continued—or, rather, the spirit speaking through him said :—

“ ‘When one single soul in God’s universe that has felt the breathing of His love is enabled to bear the wreck of its earthly hopes, is blessed by the sound of a voice that has been hushed, the touch of a hand over whose earthly form the grave has closed its leaden portals—this is the highest of blessings, is it not, Emily? To feel that love which has been purified, and the nearness of the precious souls that God intrusted to us to live for and watch over? To instil into our minds, that we may teach it to the young souls which remain, that there is no death save sin—no cruel God, but one that doeth all things well? To know that at the very moment that little soul passed away, he saw your joy to think he was at peace? To know that the little loving hand that lay so tenderly in yours could still reach forth from the dark night, to bid you look upward and see words of cheer written in scrolls of fire, and perceive how beautiful all things are? Thank God that those children have passed where suffering cometh not, and where the sunshine of His eternal love makes a day of wondrous beauty.’ Mr. Home then took Mrs. Egerton’s hand and mine, and smiled, and, turning to Mr. Peele, said, ‘In heaven all is budding, developing, and coming to perfection—all are happy in being united. There is Unice standing by you; she belongs to you. Is she a relative? Yes, a sister. There is Hannah, also a relative on your mother’s side.’ Mr. Home here drew himself up, and, crossing his hands and imitating a person of a prim, stiff manner, said, ‘Hannah is with you a great deal. You know she was rather eccentric and prim, and left earth a long time since. She is much older than Unice, but they are a great deal together. She was knitting as she stood beside her. You must not have strange ideas about identity—no one loses their identity in the spirit-world. It would be all confusion if they did; to lose your identity is to lose your individual character—understand that.’ ”

The spirits then declared that they must go, as Home’s weak state of health rendered it dangerous for the trance to continue longer. With the message, “ *We are so thankful that you have had one little gleam of our light,* ” all manifestations ceased, and Home awoke.

Mr. Peele, to whom the messages from his relatives Unice and Hannah were addressed, seems to have met Mr. Home for the first time at this séance. I am unable to give his own account of the proofs of spirit-identity there furnished to him, and noted down at the time by Mrs. Honywood; for he is one of the myriad of witnesses who have left untold the tale of their experiences at séances with Home.

Mr. Martin Smith was, I believe, a well-known banker, and the father, or other near relative, of the Captain Smith also present at this séance—the same Captain Gerard Smith, of the Scots Fusilier Guards, whose experiences at other séances with Home have been narrated a few pages back.

Of a séance held on May 13, 1870, Mrs. Honywood writes:—

“I invited to my house Mrs. Ramsay, Mrs. Wiseman, Mr. Martin Smith, Miss Fuller, Mrs. Ready, and Captain Smith, to meet Mr. Home.” After describing various phenomena similar to those already recorded, she continues:—

“Mr. Home now placed two hand-bells under the table, and took the accordion, which was heavy and had no strap, so that he held it with difficulty in his right hand, the left being on the table (on which a lighted lamp was placed). The accordion was played, and the bells rang in unison with the music. The bells seemed by the sound to be carried about under the table. Mr. Home said he saw a hand, and we all perceived the cloth lifted, as if by fingers underneath it pushing the cloth upwards. Mr. Martin Smith also saw the hand.

“These séances,” adds Mrs. Honywood, “are copied from notes made at the time and submitted to those present for their criticisms as to the correctness of my statements.”



## CHAPTER XI.

BRISTOL, SCOTLAND, LONDON, AND ST. PETERSBURG—  
TESTIMONY OF RUSSIAN MEN OF SCIENCE.

NOTHING is more disagreeable to the proprietor of a pet theory than facts which conflict with his theory. This weakness is especially noticeable among men of science. They are so fond of laying down laws for Nature, that they will not allow her to frame any for herself. They worship Truth in such blindness, that, when she presents herself to them in an unaccustomed guise, they seldom fail to drive her from them as an impostor. In public they may declare, with Professor Huxley, that the word "impossible" is not, to their mind, applicable to matters of philosophy, but in private they hold that no evidence can prove a fact possible which is irreconcilable with the particular scheme of philosophy they have framed or adopted. If this habit of scientific dogmatism should continue to spread, the twentieth century will probably see small scientific luminaries explicitly claiming for themselves that omniscience which the Carpenters and the Brewsters of the nineteenth have only implicitly asserted.

In his *Quarterly Review* article of October, 1871, "Spiritualism and its Recent Converts," Dr. Carpenter showed all the anger of a man who resents an intolerable interference with his vested interests. More than fifteen years before he had pompously given to the world an explanation of the phenomena of Spiritualism, which he christened with the sounding name of "unconscious cerebration." As the facts of Spiritualism rebelliously persisted in refusing to suit themselves to this theory of Dr. Carpenter's, its author finally lost all patience with them; and when the results of the expe-

riments conducted by Dr. Huggins and Mr. Crookes, and witnessed by Serjeant Cox, were stated to the world, Dr. Carpenter eagerly seized on this opportunity to give vent to the anger that had long burned in him. A man of any modesty and fairness would have felt that absolute ignorance of the phenomena was not the best of qualifications for sitting in judgment on them; but Dr. Carpenter rose superior to such considerations. Without ever having in his life been present at a séance with Mr. Home, he oracularly posed before the world as knowing more of the matter than men who had arrived by patient and thorough investigation at the conclusions which they had made public. Half of his *Quarterly Review* article consisted of personal attacks on Messrs. Huggins, Crookes, and Cox; in the other half the sapient writer declared his conviction that when the facts of Spiritualism refused to accord with his theory of "unconscious cerebration," the facts, and not the theory, must be in the wrong.

The remarks made by Mr. P. P. Alexander<sup>1</sup> concerning scientific hobbyists in general are amusingly applicable to Dr. W. B. Carpenter, V.P.R.S., in particular:—

"When a dogmatist of the type above indicated comes professedly to 'investigate' this or any other subject which he regards with the like *malus animus*, be sure he does not come to investigate the phenomena," wrote Mr. Alexander, "but, if possibly he can, to discredit them. That this thing is not, cannot, and *shall not* be true, is the soul of his so-called inquiry; and as his scientific reputation is a little concerned, in virtue of his attitude of dogmatic negation assumed, it is probable, if he had the money, he would be ready to pay a thousand pounds down, rather than find the thing accredited. As we do not gather grapes off a holly-bush, out of this palpable unfairness of mind we can scarce expect fairness of scientific procedure. There seems to be a good deal in Dr. Tyndall's remark that 'preconceived notions can vitiate to an extraordinary degree the testimony of even veracious people.' I venture to supplement it with the further remark that if 'the preconceived notion' should chance to be a so-called 'scientific' one, the danger is not thereby sensibly diminished. Some people, not specially scientific, might even be disposed to rule that it was rather, if anything, increased."

To what an extraordinary degree the preconceived

<sup>1</sup> "Spiritualism : a Narrative with a Discussion."

notion of "unconscious cerebration" could deprive Dr. Carpenter's statements of veracity, I have shown in my former work (pp. 303-310). The facts there marshalled, and in especial the letter of Captain Wynne, bring a crushing indictment against the inventor of "the honest sceptic." The evidence on which the *Times* recently allowed itself to be persuaded of the authenticity of certain notorious letters was trustworthy in comparison with that which satisfied the Vice-President of the Royal Society that, on the famous night when Viscount Adare, the Master of Lindsay, and Captain Wynne saw Mr. Home transported through the air at a height of seventy feet from the ground, Captain Wynne had "declared that Mr. Home was all the time sitting in his chair."<sup>1</sup>

The same determination to pervert facts at all hazards marked the *Quarterly Review* article of October, 1871. Dr. Carpenter's ingenuous method of controversy was to pass over in silence the most conclusive of the experiments made by Dr. Huggins, Mr. Crookes, &c., and to misrepresent the conditions of the remainder. Thus, in dealing with the playing of an accordion in a cage specially constructed by Mr. Crookes for the purpose of this experiment, the reviewer endeavoured to make it appear possible that the instrument might have contained some special mechanism enabling it to be played when enclosed in a cage, and held by the thumb and middle finger of one hand at the end opposite to the keys. Lest his readers should have at once detected the falsehood of this offensive insinuation, he ignored Mr. Crookes' statement:—"The accordion was a new one, having been purchased by myself for the purpose of these experiments. Mr. Home had neither handled nor seen the instrument before the commencement of the test experiments." Dr. Carpenter equally ignored the evidence of Dr. Huggins, Serjeant Cox, and Mr. Crookes, that the séance "took place in a large room lighted by gas." All readers of the *Quarterly Review*

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Carpenter in the *Contemporary Review* of January, 1876.

article of October, 1871, who had not previously seen the narrative published by Mr. Crookes, and endorsed by Dr. Huggins and Serjeant Cox, must have been left under the impression that Mr. Home had brought to a dark séance an accordion of the class on which, according to the veracious Dr. Carpenter, "juggling tricks are often exhibited at country fairs." And this is scientific honesty!

"If the reviewer had seen the experiment before complaining, it would have been more like a scientific man," wrote Mr. Crookes in "A Reply to the *Quarterly Review*." "On several subsequent occasions," he added, "the accordion has played *over* the table, and in other parts of my room away from a table, the keys moving and the bellows action going on. An accordion was selected because it is absolutely impossible to play tricks with it when held in the manner indicated. I flatly deny that, held by the end away from the keys, the performance on an accordion 'with one hand, is a juggling trick often exhibited at country fairs,' unless special mechanism exists for the purpose."

"Precisely so," Dr. Carpenter would have responded, had he been suddenly transported to the Palace of Truth; "and, as I was seeking to convey to my readers the impression that such mechanism might have existed in the case in question, I disingenuously suppressed the facts that the accordion was a new one bought by yourself, and that, until the séance commenced, it had neither been touched nor seen by Mr. Home."

On reading the *Quarterly Review* article, Dr. G. S. Thompson, of Bristol, wrote to the *Spiritual Magazine* to attest his own experiences of the phenomenon so audaciously misrepresented by Dr. Carpenter. I transcribe his letter from the issue of that periodical for January, 1872:—

"4, WORCESTER LAWN, CLIFTON, BRISTOL.

"I have just read the article in the *Quarterly Review* entitled, 'Spiritualism and its Recent Converts,' in which, among many other statements which the author discredits, is the account given by Mr. Crookes of his experiments with Mr. Home with the accordion. He seems to express a desire that the experiment be tried in open daylight, and above, instead of under a table, and in the

presence of trustworthy witnesses. I think I can satisfy him on all of these points (provided I am trustworthy, which I am considered to be by those who know me).

"At a séance in my own house, the accordion, while suspended by the lower end from one of Mr. Home's hands (while the other hand rested on the table), by which he held it at least two feet above the table, did play, and the whole party, consisting of seven persons, heard it, and, moreover, saw the keys and the bellows move simultaneously, which latter point the writer appears to have great doubt about. I may also add that the room was fully lighted, every part of it being distinctly visible.

"I should also state that Mr. Home did not see the accordion till it was given him after we were seated at the table, and that, during the time the accordion was playing, I passed my hand all round it, in order that I should be perfectly satisfied that nothing was attached to the keys.

G. S. THOMPSON, M.D."

Like his séances with Dr. and Mrs. Doun, Mr. Alexander, and Dr. Findlater in Edinburgh, the séances which Mr. Home held in Bristol arose out of his visits to that ancient city as a public reader. "I read in Bristol, the 5th of October," he writes to Mrs. Hall in a letter of 1869; and I find the *Bristol Daily Post* recording that "Mr. Home's recitations and readings attracted, as they deserve, a very good attendance at the Athenæum last night; and the cordial and frequent applause with which he was greeted told how thoroughly the audience appreciated the intellectual entertainment provided for them."

Mr. Home again read in Bristol in November, 1869; and at a later period, when he had quitted the reader's platform, he paid one or two visits to friends there. Among the persons whose acquaintance he made at Bristol in the autumn of 1869, was Mr. John Beattie, of 2, Westbourne Place, Clifton, a well-known photographer. Mr. Beattie was very desirous to obtain an opportunity of witnessing the manifestations, and at his entreaty Mr. Home held a séance in his house. A letter from Mr. Beattie, which appeared in *Human Nature* for January, 1870, describes the various phenomena which he witnessed. I extract his account of one of the most striking incidents of the séance:—

"Home knelt down before the fire, which was blazing fiercely. He leant forward, with a peculiar action of the head, as it were when a person would lean over a tub of water to dip the hair into it and not wet the face."

The element thus bathed in proved as innocuous to Home as on the occasions recorded in my former volume. "There was not the slightest smell of a hair being singed in any way," Mr. Beattie records.

While giving public readings at Glasgow, early in 1870, Mr. Home held a séance there on the 10th of February. One of the circle, Mr. H. Nisbet, contributed to *Human Nature* an account of the manifestations observed, from which I extract the following testimony:—

"Taking into his hand a small piece of red-hot coal, Mr. Home laid it for a few seconds on the hands respectively of my wife, one of my daughters, and Mr. J. N——, remarking as he did so, 'It will not burn you.' They said they felt a slight warmth while the coal lay on their hands."

At a second séance held at this time in Glasgow, there was present a Mr. Alexander Keith, a complete stranger to Mr. Home.

"I am under a deep and enduring debt of gratitude to you," he writes to Home shortly afterwards, "for the greatest blessing I ever experienced."

The experiences of Mr. Keith are thus related by him in a letter to a friend. They were naturally all the more impressive to him in view of the fact that he had seen Mr. Home for the first time in his life a few days before:—

"GLASGOW, 15th February, 1870.

"MY DEAR TEMPLETON,—I cannot allow a day to pass over without giving you and Mrs. Templeton an account of a marvellous séance that John and I had the pleasure of seeing, hearing, and feeling last night at Mr. Nisbet's, where Mr. D. D. Home was present.

"Ten of us sat down round a large dining-table. Shortly afterwards it began to move, and raps were heard all round it, and round the room—some loud and some soft. . . . Mr. Home took an accor-

dion, a large one with keys like a piano, and holding it with one hand, keys downwards (his other hand being on the table), it commenced to play 'The Last Rose of Summer,' its tones alternately swelling and dying away to the utmost softness. The instrument then played a grand anthem in a lovely way, the keys moving without visible touch.

"John felt his knee touched by a hand, and said so. I was then touched on the knee, and said that I had been touched also. Raps for the alphabet were made, and the words were spelled out, '*I touched you both—I live—Do not forget*'; and then was played immediately 'Auld Lang Syne.' I requested the spirit to spell out his name, when H. W. K. was rapped out by touches on my knee."

After declaring the emotion this message caused him, Mr. Keith continues:—

"The alphabet was called for, and this spelt out, '*No tears for me; I live, and love you and my mother.*' Mr. Home then went in the trance, stood up between John and me, and looked so like Haydon. He commenced, 'Father, it was a sad thing for you all to see me fading away when you all loved me, and that love perhaps heightened by the idea that I possessed a little talent. It was also sad for me to close my eyes upon those I loved, and I thought I was not prepared. . . . But it is wrong to suppose that we forget in heaven those we have left; we but love them more affectionately.' He then gave a sublime description of the music in heaven—the harmonious bursts of loving and grateful praise to our all-wise and loving Father.

"Turning to me again, he said, 'Father, I remember, when a boy, thinking and reflecting on death. I told you that if I was to live in any other world, I would rather live with you and see you work.' *This was a fact which no one present knew but myself.*

"Could you blame John and myself for not being able to sleep that night? This confirmation, stronger than 'proofs of Holy Writ,' has made me happy.

ALEXANDER KEITH."

Mr. Keith seems to have been by profession an artist—at least, in one of his letters to Mr. Home, I find a reference to a portrait that he had painted of the latter. I transcribe a few passages from the letter in question:—

"19, BATH STREET, PORTOBELLO, EDINBURGH, 18th June, 1871.

"MY DEAR HOME,—Amid the current of passing events I often think of you and that ever-to-be-remembered séance which gave my dear Haydon the first opportunity of communicating with me. . . .

"I see by many accounts that your mediumistic powers are as great as ever. I long much for another opportunity of a séance

with you. Have you no view of being in Edinburgh soon? Summer is the best time for visiting your native land. I have you in visible form before me, though not in the body. Some months ago I painted a life-size portrait of you, from the carte you sent to my son John, and a powerful likeness it is—an object of interest to many who have heard of you. . . . Yours most truly, ALEX. KEITH."

In the spring of 1872, six months after our marriage, Mr. Home paid a short visit to England. From London he went on to Bristol, where two séances were held in the house of the Mr. John Beattie already mentioned. In the *Spiritual Magazine* for July, 1872, there appeared the following letter from Mr. Beattie:—

"WESTBOURNE PLACE, CLIFTON, April 19th, 1872.

"On the 12th of April Mr. Home paid me a visit. About 7.30 P.M. we—three gentlemen and one lady—were sitting casually talking about general matters, when part of the furniture of the room began moving, and sounds of invisible feet were heard. Mr. Home was reclining at ease on a sofa a long way from the moving bodies.

"This made us agree to turn our attention to carefully watching what might occur. Twilight soon supervened, but everything in the room continued distinctly visible. First, a force was exerted which shook violently, not only the things in the house, but the house itself. Loud sounds were heard, that not only answered our questions, but often answered unspoken thoughts. A chair was lifted and carried across the room, and suspended in mid-air for fifteen minutes; it was then allowed to fall on the floor, and was lifted again. A large cushion was carried from the sofa, and was moved up and down in the air by hands seen distinctly."

Not to weary the reader with a mere catalogue of phenomena, I abridge this portion of Mr. Beattie's narrative. He records various other movements of objects at a distance from the circle, including the fact of a second chair having approached from a distant corner of the room, and having passed over the heads of the sitters and deposited itself on the table before them, "where," he adds, "it seemed endowed with life," as it still continued to move untouched by any person present.

"Brilliant lights were seen in the room," says Mr. Beattie; "in some places stars remained visible for minutes together—in others, bright, soft lights passed



about the room. Beings were visible, moving about ; hands and other parts of figures were often seen."

A sheet of paper lying on the table rose and floated towards Mr. Beattie, and rested on his hands. "The paper," he relates, "then rose in the air, floated towards the door, and slowly crossed the room. A lady asking that it should be given to her, it went to her, and slowly fell in her lap. After this manifestation beautiful lights were again seen in the room." The power then seemed to die away, and the séance came to a close.

A few days later a second séance was held with a different circle of investigators.

"On Saturday evening," writes Mr. Beattie, "a few gentlemen, all well known in Clifton, and some of them eminent in science, met to see Mr. Home. One was an M.D., one a minister of the Gospel, one a teacher of classics in a public school, another a cultured private gentleman. There were also present a lady and myself.

"Manifestations occurred, not the same as above, but equally strange. On this occasion Mr. Home was entranced. I will not take up space to describe the transfiguration that then took place in him, nor the positive proof given to me and others that we were in the presence of intelligent beings that were once in bodies like our own. I will only say that, while entranced, his body was raised three times from the floor and floated in the room.

"In conclusion, let me state, once for all, that the theory of deception has here no foothold whatever : in each case there were three senses at work, and the phenomena were not quietly accepted, but in each case carefully examined and tested.

"JOHN BEATTIE."

In the *Bristol Times and Mirror* of April 15, 1871, there appeared a letter from a lady who is a namesake of Mr. Home, and who had been present at a séance with him. It was called forth by some remarks made in the Bristol paper on an offensive and untruthful letter which had been sent to the *Standard* by the St. Petersburg correspondent of that journal :—

"REDLAND, April 14, 1871.

"Mr. D. D. Home has many friends and admirers who are not Spiritualists, and in their ranks I claim an humble place.

"On one occasion only have I been a witness of what are called

'spiritual manifestations'; and the conclusion I came to was that the phenomena are preternatural and inexplicable. The very last theory that I saw any ground for adopting was that of trickery. . . .

"Upon the whole, it would be more becoming if the partisans of both sides were a little more temperate, and especially that anonymous 'correspondents' should abstain from ascribing to 'charlatanism' that which has puzzled and impressed the most highly placed and highly educated men in Europe and America.

"G. Y. HOME."

Serjeant Cox, to whose investigations in company with Dr. Huggins and Mr. Crookes I have referred a few pages back, had his attention drawn to the subject of Spiritualism by the Lyon suit and the inquiry conducted in 1869 by the Dialectical Society. He made the acquaintance of Mr. Home early in the summer of that year, and after having been present at a séance with him, writes to Home (July 26, 1869):—

"The proceedings of that night interested me extremely, and I am anxious to see more of the mystery. Would you spend a day with me at my country-house, and favour me with a quiet 'sitting'?"

Mr. Home accepted the invitation, and subsequently paid other visits to the Serjeant's country-place.

"You sat with me," wrote its owner to Home on March 8, 1876, "anywhere at any time; in my garden, and in my house; by day and by night; but always, with one memorable exception, in full light. You objected to no tests; on the contrary, you invited them. I was permitted the full use of my senses. The experiments were made in every form that ingenuity could devise. . . . Sometimes there were phenomena, sometimes there were none. When they occurred, they were often such as no human hand could have produced without the machinery of the Egyptian Hall. But these were in my own drawing-room, and library, and garden, where no mechanism was possible."

Besides these séances in his own house, Serjeant Cox was present at numerous others held by Mr. Home during the years 1869–1871. Among them was one of the many given to the Halls. Mrs. Honynwood, who was present, recorded at the time the various manifestations witnessed, and sent her narra-

tive to Serjeant Cox, who, after reading it, added his signature in attestation of its correctness. The kindness of Mrs. Honynwood enables me to reproduce it here:—

“On December 23, 1870, at Ashley House we sat as follows:—Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, Lord and Lady Adare, Serjeant Cox, Mr. D. D. Home, and myself. The séance commenced by a cool breeze, followed by vibrations in the table and floor.”

The earlier manifestations of the séance may be passed over briefly. Raps were heard, which sounded a certain number of times at request; thus, on seven raps being asked for by one of the sitters, “seven loud raps responded,” writes Mrs. Honynwood, “and seven shocks or vibrations were felt. Then the table floated off the floor, and descended again seven times. At Mr. Home’s request, Mr. S. C. Hall looked beneath the table while it oscillated in the air.”

“Mr. Home now took the accordion in one hand, and held it under the table by the strap. Lady Adare looked at the instrument by Mr. Home’s wish, and saw the bellows working; the keys were towards her, and were played with a strong tremolo movement. She asked for ‘The Last Rose of Summer;’ and it was exquisitely played, with variations, the sounds dying away and then increasing in volume, with fine chords. A bird-like voice or sound was heard by Lord and Lady Adare and Mr. Home, accompanying the accordion. I was conscious of more than the sound of the instrument, yet not clearly enough to affirm that it was a voice.

“Five notes on the accordion called for the alphabet, and ‘*There will be a sweet home: Courage,*’ was spelt out by similar sounds. ‘Home, Sweet Home’ was then played, followed by the message, ‘*Glory to God the Highest, and forgiveness to those who do wrong and sow discord. May God forgive them.*’

“Mr. Home and Lord Adare said they knew to what this especially referred. The air was played between each word, grandly and solemnly; *God* was solemnly spelt out, while, at *discord*, the most wildly discordant sounds were produced to indicate the intended word.

“A bell, held by Mr. Home beneath the table, was played on with a sound like chimes; it then left his hand and moved about, sounding the while, and was finally given to S. C. Hall, behind whom both Mrs. Hall and Mr. Home saw a hand. Serjeant Cox and Mrs. Hall were between Mr. Hall and Mr. Home.”

The touch of invisible hands was felt by several of the circle, and dresses were rustled and pulled. Messages were given, including a name known to Lord Adare; and presently Mr. Home again took the accordion. While it was playing, some one of the sitters—who was thinking probably of the great struggle then raging, and of which Home had only a few weeks before been a spectator—suddenly asked, “Can you give us any idea of war?”

“The most fearful discords were played in response,” writes Mrs. Honynwood. “Mr. Home then passed into a trance, and slowly walked round the table, standing for a few seconds behind each person.

“He presently approached the fireplace. I could see him well, and had, in fact, a double view of his movements; for, looking before me, his form was visible against the bright firelight, and, looking sideways, I saw it reflected in a mirror on the side wall. I saw him plunge his hands amongst the burning coals, and stir them about, then take some off and place them in the grate below. He selected a good-sized ember, red beneath and flaming at the top, carried it about in his hands for a few seconds, and then asked Lady Adare if she could hold it without fear.

“She held out her hand, and he placed it on the palm, afterwards on Mrs. Hall’s; then laid the ember on a piece of paper, which it singed and burnt. I asked, ‘May I also hold a coal?’ Mr. Home appeared to listen to some voice unheard by us; then nodded his head and answered, ‘They say you may.’ Taking another coal out of the grate, red beneath and black above, he brought it quickly to me, and asked, ‘Have you faith?’ On my affirming that I had, and holding out my hand, he placed the coal on my palm. I did not feel it hot at all, although I could hear it crackling. Mr. Home then said, ‘Let all look, that no one may say we have changed it.’ All eyes were directed to the ember; and, doubling up his hand with the exception of the forefinger, he slowly pushed the coal with his forefinger from my palm on to a doubled piece of cartridge paper held by Serjeant Cox and Lord Adare. Mr. Cox tried to touch the coal, but could not, it was so hot; and the paper at once caught fire, and was burnt into a hole.

“Taking a third burning coal, Mr. Home placed it on his head. It did not even singe his hair. He then said, in the trance, that the especial purpose of these manifestations had been to convince Serjeant Cox, and that we must write on the piece of paper itself an attestation of the coal having burnt it, and sign all our names to it. We did so; and Serjeant Cox took the paper in question away with him to keep.

“B. HONYWOOD.

“EDWD. WM. COX.”

Soon after this séance Mr. Home left for Russia. On his return, at the end of March, 1871, the séances with Mr. Crookes commenced. In his narrative of his investigations, Mr. Crookes only deals with experiments made and phenomena witnessed at his own house ; and his own declarations show that he is far from having published particulars of all of those. An account of a séance at which he and Serjeant Cox were present has been sent me by Mrs. Honywood, endorsed with their signatures in testimony of its correctness, and also with those of two other witnesses to whom the paper was submitted.

“On the 22nd of April, 1871, Mr. Home kindly came to my house,” writes Mrs. Honywood, “to meet Mrs. Senior, Miss Douglas, Serjeant Cox, Mr. Wm. Crookes, Mr. Collins, and Mr. Blanchard.”

The earlier phenomena of the séance may be briefly summarised. Raps were heard, Mr. Collins felt himself touched by an unseen hand, and a jet brooch worn by Mrs. Honywood was unfastened and carried to Mr. Home.

On the opposite side of the table from him sat Miss Douglas.

“We all heard her silk dress pulled and rustled,” writes Mrs. Honywood, “and she said she felt a hand patting hers. Mr. Serjeant Cox also said that he was touched.

“A silver bell held by Mr. Home beneath the table left his hand, and was carried to Serjeant Cox, from whom it was presently taken, but dropped on the floor. Placing another bell—a glass one—flat on his hand, Mr. Home held it under the table. It was carried away, and we heard the handle tapping the under surface of the table as it moved about, and keeping a kind of musical time or measure. This second bell was finally placed in Mr. Crookes’ hand ; and we now heard the silver bell moving about and ringing. In front of Mr. Home, and also before myself, the cloth on the table moved and bulged out as if a hand were lifting it from beneath ; and I felt as it were the back of a hand tapping mine as it rested on the table. On Mr. Collins holding the glass bell by the handle beneath the table, it was taken from him and carried to Miss Douglas.

“The cloth before me again moved, and I felt fingers pat my wrist, while a music-book lying on my lap, which I was using as a desk, was lifted several times.

"Mr. Home asked (of the spirits), 'Are you pleased at these investigations?' An answer was given in a manner visible to all present, the music-book lying on my knee being three times lifted to signify 'Yes,' and raised so high that all present could see the manifestation. 'You will do all in your power to help us?' Mr. Home continued; and again the book rose three times in the air. 'Will you lift the book again?' he asked; and the phenomenon was once more repeated."

Similar physical phenomena marked the remainder of the séance. A pencil was carried from Mr. Home to Mr. Blanchard, who sat opposite him, and a bell to Mrs. Honywood. "Something pushed against me," she writes, "and on putting down my hand, the bell was placed in it sideways, without a sound from the clapper."

A message to one of the sitters closed the séance. "Turning to Mrs. Senior," writes Mrs. Honywood, "Mr. Home said, 'Who is James Fitz-Henry? He says that you know, and that he is a relation of some one called Richard. There are two of them—Henri and Jules; Jules married a Fitz-Henry. He—James Fitz-Henry—wants to tell you that what you have done is right and good. You understand what he means?'"

"'Yes, I do,' Mrs. Senior answered."

Mrs. Honywood's paper is signed by the four of the circle to whom it was sent, in the following order:—

"ADELAIDE SENIOR.  
WILLIAM CROOKES.  
W. H. COLLINS.  
EDWD. WM. COX."

The absence of the names of Miss Douglas and Mr. Blanchard (both Spiritualists) was merely due to the fact that Mrs. Honywood omitted to send her manuscript to them.

Six days later another séance was held at Mrs. Honywood's. The manifestations were recorded by her in a manuscript now before me, to which confirmatory particulars have been added by Mrs. Senior and Mr. Crookes:—

"On the 28th of April, 1871," writes Mrs. Honynwood, "Mr. D. D. Home, Mrs. Senior, Serjeant Cox, Miss Speers, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Walter Crookes, Mr. William Crookes, Mr. Bergheim, and myself sat at a table with a lamp upon it. There were also a pair of candles in the back drawing-room communicating with the room where the séance was held.

"After a while there were vibrations in the floor and table. These had the peculiarity of being felt by but one of the circle at a time, and not generally. On raps being heard on table and floor, Miss Speers knocked on the table, and was answered by raps apparently just under her hand."

At the request of Mr. Home, Miss Speers looked under the table, the phenomena continuing the while. The table rose and moved; Mr. Home's chair was drawn back, his legs being stretched out before him, and his feet off the floor. Miss Speers, who had been looking both above and below the table as it moved, now rose, and standing behind Mr. Home with one hand on his chair-back, both felt and saw the movement of the chair.

On the table before the sitters lay a glass bell. Without any of the circle touching it, or the bell moving, the clapper was sounded three times at request. This phenomenon was several times repeated, the clapper always striking the precise number of times desired. Presently Mrs. Senior and Serjeant Cox felt themselves touched, and exactly under the feet of the latter loud knocks sounded on the floor:—

"He said he felt them on a board under his foot," writes Mrs. Honynwood, "and asked Miss Speers to place her foot there, and that the raps should be repeated. This was directly complied with.

"Mr. Home placed the accordion on the floor under the table, where it sounded and swayed about. I remarked how pretty a manifestation it was, when notes sounded on it gave the letters in a message, and three distinct notes were instantly sounded, as if in assent. Mrs. Senior now took the instrument in one hand, but could not hold it firmly and steadily. It continued to sound and sway about, and finally moved towards Mr. Home. Several of us now heard a strange sound in the room. It reminded me of the whistling, wailing cry or note of a wild duck; others said it was like a person trying to whistle. Mr. Home was now drawn back from the table some three feet; then his chair stopped, and again resuming its movement, glided a distance of about five feet in all. His

feet were off the floor the while; and as the chair was moving I threw a handkerchief over them, in order that their position might be more easily seen.

"Mrs. Senior began conversing with Serjeant Cox about Mr. Nassau Senior, and while doing so we all heard a voice utter a sound like a deep-toned 'Yes.'"

Here Mrs. Honeywood's narrative breaks off, and Mrs. Senior temporarily takes the pen :—

"I had been telling Serjeant Cox," she writes, "of a message I received through Mr. Home from my brother-in-law, Mr. Nassau Senior, immediately after his death, as to the last words he had heard on earth, which were :—'Oh, it is only a little indigestion, or perhaps a slight cold.' These words were uttered by his doctor at his bedside an hour after his seizure. As I ended what I had been saying to Serjeant Cox, we all heard a sound like *Yes*, as if in verification of what I had said. This sound was certainly not made by Mr. Home.

ADELAIDE SENIOR."

Mr. Home now passed into a trance, and a manifestation occurred of which one person was more particularly the observer, although it occurred in sight of all the circle. Taking the handkerchief mentioned by Mrs. Honeywood, Mr. Home went into the back drawing-room, accompanied by Mr. Crookes. The latter contributed to the manuscript now before me the following account of what he witnessed :—

"At Mr. Home's request, whilst he was entranced," writes Mr. Crookes, "I went with him to the fireplace in the back drawing-room. He said, 'We want you to notice particularly what Dan is doing.' Accordingly, I stood close to the fire, and stooped down to it when he put his hands in. He very deliberately pulled the lumps of hot coal off, one at a time, with his right hand, and touched one which was bright red. He then said, 'The power is not strong on Dan's hand, as we have been influencing the pocket-handkerchief most. It is more difficult to influence an inanimate body like that than any living flesh. So, as the circumstances were favourable, we thought we would show you that we could prevent a red-hot coal from burning a cambric handkerchief. We will collect more power on the handkerchief, and repeat it before you now.' Mr. Home then



waved the handkerchief about in the air two or three times, and held it up above his head; he then folded it up like a cushion, and laid it on his head. Putting his other hand into the fire, he took out a large lump of cinder, red-hot at the lower part, and placed the red part on the handkerchief. Under ordinary circumstances it would have been instantly in a blaze. In about half a minute he took it off the handkerchief with his hand, saying, 'The power is not strong; if we leave the coal longer it will burn.' He then put the coal on his hand, and brought it to the table in the front drawing-room, where all the company but myself were still sitting round the table.

WILLIAM CROOKES."

"Coming up to Miss Speers," adds Mrs. Honynwood, "he said, 'Will you trust me? It will not burn you.' He took her hand and held it over the coal; then asked her again if she would let him place the coal in her hand, assuring her that it would not burn her. She was afraid to take it; and he then went to Serjeant Cox, and made him place his hand near to feel the heat.

"Mr. Home had a beautiful gardenia in his button-hole. I admired it; on which, putting his hand over it like a cup, he threw scent at me from the flower, and then at all the circle in succession. We could smell it most distinctly. After a time, he said, 'I have given away all the sweetness.' I smelt the flower, and scarcely any perfume remained. Mr. Home now went over to the fireplace, waved the flower for a few seconds in the warm air, and coming back with the flower uninjured, he held it out to me; and I found that all the scent had returned."

The few lines of personal testimony contributed by Mr. Crookes to the narrative of Mrs. Honynwood rank him among the witnesses who have certified to the phenomenon of innocuous contact with fire. Mrs. Honynwood's evidence shows that he was equally the witness of another remarkable and not infrequent manifestation, the withdrawal by the spirits of the scent of a flower, and its subsequent restoration. Neither fact finds a record in the three or four papers on his experiments with Mr. Home published by Mr. Crookes in the years 1871-74. This omission might be wondered at if the papers in question professed to be at all comprehensive; but in the last of the brief series ("Notes of an Enquiry into the Phenomena called Spiritual," *Quarterly Journal of Science*, January, 1874), Mr. Crookes expressly apprised his readers that there were other facts which it was in his power

to give. "On going over my notes," he remarked, "I find such a wealth of facts, such a superabundance of evidence, so overwhelming a mass of testimony, all of which will have to be marshalled in order, that I could fill several numbers of the *Quarterly*. I must therefore be content on this occasion with an outline only of my labours, leaving proofs and full details to another occasion."

In the *Proceedings* for the second half of 1889 of the Society for Psychical Research, there appear some of the notes made by Mr. Crookes more than fifteen years before. The kindness of the Society and its honorary secretary, Mr. Myers, enables me to reproduce them here. I preface them with some extracts from the remarks prefixed to them by Professor Crookes.

#### NOTES OF SÉANCES WITH D. D. HOME.

BY W. CROOKES, F.R.S.

In a paper reprinted from the *Quarterly Journal of Science* for January, 1874, I announced my intention of publishing a book, which should contain my numerous printed and unprinted observations.

But this projected work has never seen the light. My excuse,—a real excuse, though not a complete justification,—lies in the extreme pressure of other work on my time and energies. . . . I must confess, indeed, that I have been disappointed with the progress of psychical research during the last fifteen years. I see little abatement of the credulity on the one hand and the fraud on the other which have all along interfered, as I hold, with the recognition of new truth of profound interest. . . .

Invited to contribute to the Society for Psychical Research *Proceedings*, some of my notes on séances with D. D. Home, I feel I ought not to decline. I am not satisfied with these notes; which form, so to say, only a few bricks for an intended edifice it is not now probable I shall ever build. But, at least, they are

accurate transcripts of facts which I still hold to be of deep importance to science. Their publication will, at any rate, show that I have not changed my mind; that on dispassionate review of statements put forth by me nearly twenty years ago I find nothing to retract or to alter. I have discovered no flaw in the experiments then made, or in the reasoning I based upon them. . . .

The evidence for the genuineness of the phenomena obtained by Home in my presence seems to me to be strengthened rather than weakened by the discussions on conjuring, and the exposures of fraud which have since taken place. The object of such discussions is to transform *vague* possibilities of illusion and deception into *definite* possibilities; so far as this has yet been done, it has, I think, been made more clear that certain of Home's phenomena fall quite outside the category of marvels producible by sleight of hand or prepared apparatus. . . .

The notes were written primarily for my own information,—copied or expanded almost immediately after each séance from pencil-notes made while the phenomena were actually going forward. . . .

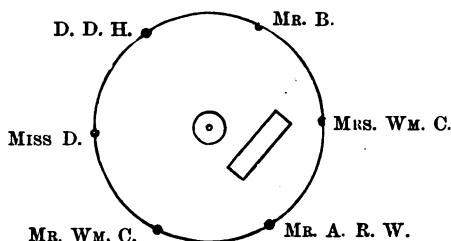
My object in publishing these notes will have been attained if they should aid in inducing competent observers, in this or other countries, to repeat similar experiments with accurate care, and in a dispassionate spirit. Most assuredly, so far as my knowledge of science goes, there is absolutely no reason *à priori* to deny the possibility of such phenomena as I have described. Those who assume—as is assumed by some popular writers—that we are now acquainted with all, or nearly all, or even with any assignable proportion, of the forces at work in the universe, show a limitation of conception which ought to be impossible in an age when the widening of the circle of our definite knowledge does but reveal the proportionately widening circle of our blank, absolute, indubitable ignorance.

(I.) MONDAY, MAY 22nd, 1871.—Sitting at 81, South Audley Street. From 9.45 to 11 P.M.

*Present* :—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Miss D., Mr. B., Mr. A. R. W., Mrs. Wm. C., Mr. Wm. C.

In the front drawing-room, at a loo-table, supported on centre pillar and three feet. Lighted with candles the whole of the evening.

Order of sitting :—



The small sofa-table, mentioned in the account of the last séance at this house, was about two feet behind Miss D. An accordion was on the table, and a small candlestick and candle.

*Phenomena.*—In a few minutes a slight tremor of the table was felt. Mr. A. R. W. was touched. Then Mrs. Wm. C. felt her knee touched and her dress pulled. Miss D.'s dress was pulled, and I was touched on my right knee as by a heavy hand firmly placed on it.

The table tilted up on two and sometimes on one leg several times, rising up at the side opposite each person successively, whilst all who wished took the candle and examined underneath to see that no one of the party was doing it with the feet. Granting that Mr. Home might have been able, if he so desired, to influence mechanically the movement of the table, it is evident that he could only have done so in two directions, but here the table moved successively in six directions.

The table now rose completely off the ground several times, whilst the gentlemen present took a candle, and kneeling down, deliberately examined the position of Mr. Home's feet and knees, and saw the three feet of the table quite off the ground. This was repeated, until each observer expressed himself satisfied that the levitation was not produced by mechanical means on the part of the medium or any one else present.

The alphabet was now called for by five raps. The letters given out were taken down :—

“ We igh—”

Thinking this the commencement of a sentence, we tried to get the next letter, but no response was given. Then we said that some letter had been given wrong. One thump said emphatically, “No.” We then said, “We have got the first word ‘We’ all right, but we want the second word.” “Is *i* right?” “Yes.” “Is *g* right?” “Yes.” “Is *h* right?” “Yes.”

After thinking for a moment, it suddenly occurred that the word

was "Weigh," and that it referred to an experiment I had come prepared to repeat—that of measuring the variation in weight of the table by means of a spring balance.

A perfect shower of raps showed that this interpretation was the correct one.

I accordingly repeated the experiments which were tried at the last sitting at this house, using a stronger spring balance.

*Experiment 1.*—"Be light." The table tilted, when the balance showed a weight of scarcely half-a-pound.

*Experiment 2.*—"Be heavy." The table now bore a pull of 20 lb. before it tilted up on one side, all hands being placed under the top edge of the table, thumbs visible.

*Experiment 3.*—I now asked if the opposing force could be so applied as to cause the table to rise up off the ground quite horizontally when I was pulling. Immediately the table rose up completely off the ground, the top keeping quite horizontal, and the spring balance showing a pull of 23 lb. During this experiment Mr. Home's hands were put *on* the table, the others being under, as at first.

*Experiment 4.*—"Be heavy." All hands beneath the table top. It required a pull of 43 lb. to lift the table from the floor this time.

*Experiment 5.*—"Be heavy." This time Mr. B. took a lighted candle and looked under the table to assure himself that the additional weight was not produced by any one's feet or otherwise. Whilst he was there observing, I tried with the balance and found that a pull of 27 lb. was required to lift the table up. Mr. Home, Mr. A. R. W., and the two ladies had their fingers fairly under the top of the table, and Mr. B. said that no one was touching the table beneath to cause the increase of weight.

(It may be here mentioned that to tilt one foot of the table off the ground required an upward pull of 14 lb. applied to the top just above the foot.)

When these experiments were finished, we all sat quietly round the table for a few minutes, when suddenly the small sofa-table came up to within about six inches of Miss D. It glided along with a quick, steady movement. It did not move again after it stopped the first time.

(Just before I sat down to the séance, remembering that the table had moved up to the circle apparently of its own accord the last time we had a séance here, I pushed the table rather away from its usual place, putting it just about two feet behind Miss D.'s chair.

I took notice then that there was no string or anything else attached to it. After I had so placed it no one else went near it, so that its movement on this occasion was entirely beyond suspicion.)

Miss D.'s chair moved partly round. On attempting to replace it as before, she said she could not move it, as it was firmly fixed to the floor. I attempted to pull it along, but it resisted all my efforts.

Mr. Home's chair then moved several times, and tilted up on two

legs, whilst Mr. Home's feet were up in the chair in a semi-kneeling posture, and his hands before him not touching anything.

The tablecloth in front of Mr. Home just at the edge of the table was bulged outwards as if a hand were beneath it, and we then saw a movement of the cloth as if fingers were moving under it.

Mr. Home then took the accordion in one hand in his usual manner, and held it beneath the table. At first chords were sounded, and then a very beautiful piece with bass and treble was played. Each of the gentlemen in turn looked at the accordion under the table whilst it was playing.

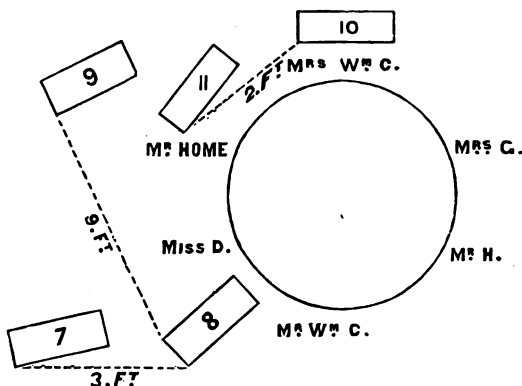
Mr. A. R. W. then asked for "Home, Sweet Home." A few bars of this air were immediately sounded. He looked under the table, and said he saw a hand distinctly moving the instrument up and down and playing on the keys. Mr. Home had one hand on the table and was holding the top end of the accordion, whilst Mr. A. R. W. saw this hand at the bottom end where the keys were.

(II.) MONDAY, JUNE 19th, 1871.—Sitting at 81, South Audley Street. From 9 to 11 P.M.

*Present* :—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Miss D., Mrs. G., Mrs. Wm. C., Mr. Wm. C., Mr. H.

In the front drawing-room, at the small round table three feet in diameter.

Order of sitting, &c. :—



7.—Original position of small table.

8.—Position where table (7) was first taken to.

9.—" " " " " " " " " " " "

10.—Small table "behind Mrs. Wm. C.

11.—Position where table (10) was taken to.

Just before sitting down, remembering that the table (7) had been moved on the last occasion, I went to it and pushed it into the farthest corner of the room.

After sitting for some little time, we had raps and movements of

the table. I asked if I might weigh the table when Mr. Home was not touching it at all.—“Yes.”

*Experiment 1.*—I thereupon fixed the spring balance to it, and asking for it to be made heavy, tried to lift it off the ground. It required a pull of 23 lb. to raise it. During this time Mr. Home was sitting back in his chair, his hands quite off the table and his feet touching those on each side of him.

*Experiment 2.*—“Be heavy” again. Mr. H. now took a candle, and stooping down, looked under the table to see that no one was touching it there, whilst I was observing the same at the top. Mr. Home’s hands and feet were the same as before. The balance now showed a tension of 22 lb.

*Experiment 3* was now tried, Mr. Home being further from the table. A pull of 17 lb. was required.

*Experiment 4.*—When we said “Be light,” the table rose at 12 lb. On trying afterwards the normal pull required to tilt it, we found it to be 14 lb.

It was now proposed to put out the candles and sit by the light coming in from the windows, which was quite sufficient to enable us to see each other and the principal articles of furniture in the room.

We presently heard a noise in the back drawing-room as if a man had got off the couch and was coming to us. Mrs. Wm. C. said it came up to her, and she then felt a pair of large hands on her head, then on her shoulders, and on her back. Her chair was then moved partly round towards Mrs. G., away from Mr. Home.

A noise and crash as of something falling was now heard behind Mrs. Wm. C.’s chair, and the small table (10) was pressed up close to her. Her chair was tilted up till she was jammed between the back of the chair and the table we were sitting round, and her chair resisted all her efforts to press it down.

Raps came, and a message to get a light.

On lighting the candle, it was seen that the noise had been caused by a picture which had been on the table resting against the wall, falling down on to the floor. It was uninjured. The table (10) had been moved up close to Mrs. Wm. C., between her and Mr. Home.

Mr. Home then took the accordion in his right hand in the usual manner, and placing his left on the table, it was held both by Miss D. and Mrs. Wm. C. The light was then put out, and the following message was spelt:—

“The Four Seasons. Winter first.”

“Spring.—The Birth of the Flowers.”

“Birds in Summer.”

The above messages were given whilst the piece was being played. It would be impossible to give any idea of the beauty of the music, or its expressive character. During the part typifying summer we had a beautiful accompaniment, the chirping and singing of the

birds being heard along with the accordion. During autumn, we had "The Last Rose of Summer" played.

Home said that the spirit playing was a stranger to him. It was a high and very powerful one, and was a female who had died young.

Mrs. Wm. C. said: "Is it my cousin M——? It has flashed into my mind that it is she?"

Answer by raps: "Yes."

We then heard a rustling noise on a heliotrope which was growing in a flower-pot standing on the table between Mr. Home and Mrs. Wm. C. On looking round, Mrs. Wm. C. saw what appeared to be a luminous cloud on the plant. (Mr. Home said it was a hand.) We then heard the crackling as of a sprig being broken off, and then a message came:—

"For Ellen."

Immediately the white, luminous cloud was seen to travel from the heliotrope to Mrs. Wm. C.'s hand, and a small sprig of the plant was put into it. She had her hand then patted by a delicate female hand. She could not see the hand itself, but only a halo of luminous vapour over her hand.

The table (7) was now heard to be moving, and it was seen to glide slowly up to the side of Miss D., to the position marked (8), about three feet. Miss D. cried out "Oh! oh! How very curious! I have had something carried round my neck. It is now put into my hand. It is a piece of heath." A message came:—

"In Memoriam."

Mr. Home said, "Count the number of flowers on the sprig. There is a meaning in all this." Eleven were counted. Mr. R. C. had eleven children.

The candle (which had been lighted to ascertain this) was again put out. Mr. Home took the accordion in his right hand, whilst his other hand was held by Miss D. and Mrs. Wm. C. The others present also joined hands. The accordion played, and we then saw something white move from the table close to Miss D., pass behind her and Mr. Home, and come into the circle between him and Mrs. Wm. C. It floated about for half a minute, keeping a foot above the table. It touched Mrs. Wm. C., then went round near to the others as if floating about with a circular movement. It presently settled on the backs of Miss D.'s, Mr. Home's, and Mrs. Wm. C.'s hands, which were grasped together. The message was given:—

"Light and look,"

and we then saw that the floating object had been a china card plate with cards in it, which had previously been on the table behind Miss D.

The light was again put out, and we then heard a sticking and scraping along the floor, and then a heavy bump against the door. Very loud raps were then heard on the table and in other parts of



the room. Movements of the table were felt ; and then all was quiet. We lighted the candle, and saw that the small table which had already moved up to Miss D. had travelled right across the room, a distance of nine feet, and, thumping against the door, had produced the noise we had all heard.

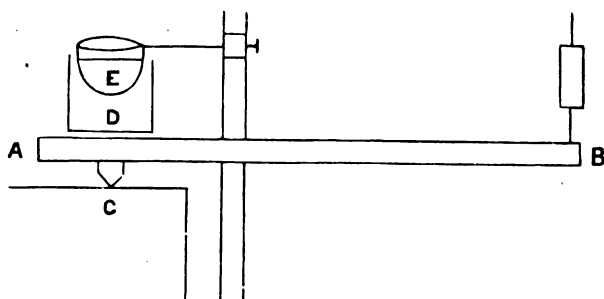
Nothing else took place after this.

(III.) WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21st, 1871.—Sitting at 20, Mornington Road. From 8.40 to 10.30 P.M.

*Present*.—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mrs. Wr. C., Mr. Wr. C., Mrs. H., Mr. C. G., Mr. Serjt. C., Mr. Wm. C., Mrs. Wm. C., Miss A. C.

In the dining room lighted by one gas-burner. Round the dining-table without a leaf in it.

On the table were an accordion, a long, thin wooden lath, a pencil and some paper ; and by the side, partly resting on the table, was an apparatus for testing alteration in the weight of a body. It consisted of a mahogany board, A B, 36 inches long, 9 inches wide,



and 1 inch thick, supported at the end B by a spring balance, and resting at C on the flat stand by means of a wooden fulcrum cut to a knife edge, and 3 inches from the end A. D is a glass bowl of water, standing on the board in such a manner that its weight partly fell between the fulcrum C and the end B, producing with the weight of the board a tension of 5 lb. on the spring balance. E is a hemispherical copper vessel, perforated at the bottom, and firmly supported on a massive iron stand rising from the floor. E was so arranged that it dipped into water in D, but was 2 inches from D all round the circumference, and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches from the bottom. It was sufficiently firmly supported to prevent any knocking or pushing to which it might be subjected from being communicated to the glass vessel D and thence to the board and spring balance. I and my assistant had well tested it in this respect beforehand.

Under the table was the wire cage described previously, and three Groves cells were in connection with the surrounding wire. A com-

mutator in the circuit prevented a current circulating till I pressed down a key.

*Phenomena.*—Almost immediately very strong vibrations of the table were felt. Answers to questions “Yes” and “No” were given by these vibrations.

Mr. Home’s hands were contracted in a very curious and painful-looking manner. He then got up and gently placed the fingers of his right hand in the copper vessel E, carefully avoiding coming near any other part of the apparatus. Mrs. Wm. C., who was sitting near the apparatus, saw the end B of the board gently descend and then rise again. On referring to the automatic register, it showed that an increased tension of 10 ounces had been produced.

Nothing more took place.

(IV.) WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21st, 1871.—Sitting at 20, Mornington Road. From 10.45 to 11.45. (This séance was held shortly after the previous one. We all got up, moved about, opened the windows, and changed our positions. Miss A. C. then went to bed, and we proposed sitting down again.)

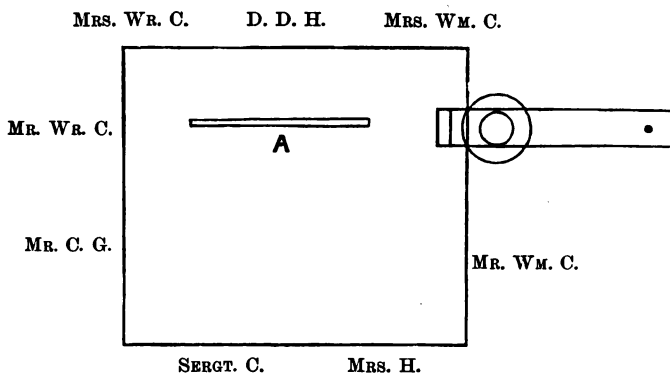
*Present* :—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mrs. Wr. C., Mr. Wr. C., Mrs. H., Mr. C. G., Mr. Serjt. C., Mr. Wm. C., Mrs. Wm. C.

In the dining-room. The table and apparatus the same as before.

The light was diminished, but it was still light enough to enable us to distinguish each other plainly and see every movement. The apparatus was also distinctly visible.

The automatic register was pushed up close to the index of the balance.

We sat in the following order :—



A was a lath already mentioned.

Almost immediately a message came “Hands off.” After sitting quiet for a minute or two, all holding hands, we heard loud raps on the table, then on the floor by the weight apparatus. The appa-

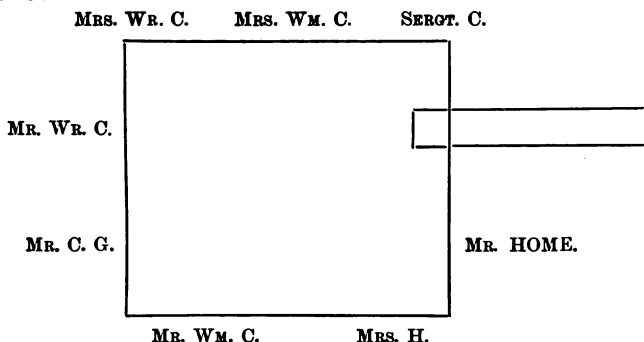
ratus was then moved, and the spring balance was heard to move about strongly. We then had the following message :—

“Weight altered a little. Look.”

I then got up and looked at the register. It had descended to 14 lb., showing an additional tension of  $(14-5 = )$  9 lb.

As this result had been obtained when there was scarcely light enough to see the board and index move, I asked for it to be repeated when there was more light. The gas was turned up, and we sat as before. Presently the board was seen to move up and down (Mr. Home being some distance off and not touching the table, his hands being held), and the index was seen to descend to 7 lb., where the register stopped. This showed a tension of  $7-5 = 2$  lb.

Mr. Home now told us to alter our position. We now sat as follows :—



A message was given :—

“All hands except Dan’s off the table.”

Mr. Home thereupon moved his chair to the extreme corner of the table, and turned his feet quite away from the apparatus, close to Mrs. H. Loud raps were heard on the table and then on the mahogany board, and the latter was shaken rather strongly up and down. The following message was then given :—

“We have now done our utmost.”

On going to the spring balance, it was seen by the register to have descended to 9 lb., showing an increase of tension of  $(9-5) = 4$  lb.

The apparatus was now removed away from the table, and we returned to our old places (see first diagram).

We sat still for a few minutes, when a message came :—

“Hands off the table, and all joined.”

We therefore sat as directed.

Just in front of Mr. Home, and on the table, in about the position shown at A on the diagram, was a thin wooden lath,  $23\frac{1}{4}$  inches long,

1½ inch wide, and ⅜ inch thick, covered with white paper. It was plainly visible to all, and was one foot from the edge of the table.

Presently the end of this lath, pointing towards Mr. Wr. C., rose up in the air to the height of about ten inches. The other end then rose up to a height of about five inches, and the lath then floated about for more than a minute in this position, suspended in the air, with no visible means of support. It moved sideways, and waved gently up and down, just like a piece of wood on the top of small waves of the sea. The lower end then gently sank till it touched the table, and the other end then followed.

Whilst we were all speaking about this wonderful exhibition of force, the lath began to move again, and rising up as it did at first, it waved about in a somewhat similar manner. The startling novelty of this movement having now worn off, we were all enabled to follow its motions with more accuracy. Mr. Home was sitting away from the table, at least three feet from the lath, all this time. He was apparently quite motionless, and his hands were tightly grasped, his right by Mrs. Wr. C. and his left by Mrs. Wm. C. Any movement by his feet was impossible, as, owing to the large cage being under the table, his legs were not able to be put beneath, but were visible to those on each side of him. All the others had hold of hands. As soon as this was over the following message was given:—

"We have to go now, but before going we thank you for your patience. Mary sends love to aunt, and will play another time."

The séance then broke up at a quarter to twelve.

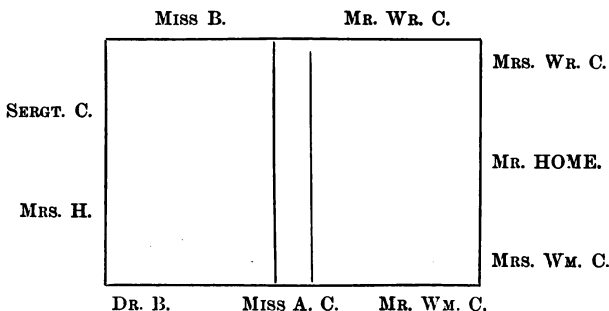
(V.) FRIDAY, JUNE 23rd, 1871.—Sitting at 20, Mornington Road. From 8.30 to 11 P.M.

*Present*:—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mrs. Wr. C., Mr. Wr. C., Miss B., Serjt. C., Mrs. H., Dr. B., Miss A. C., Mr. Wm. C., Mrs. Wm. C.

In the dining-room; lighted sometimes by one gas burner, sometimes by salted spirit-lamp, sometimes by light from street.

The dining-table had no flap in it, but was slightly opened in the centre (about four inches). On the table were the accordion, a small hand bell, lath, paper, pencil, phosphorus half under water, and a spirit-lamp with a salted wick.

Order of sitting:—



The cloth was on the table all this time.

At first we sat with one gas-burner alight.

After sitting for about ten minutes the table vibrated strongly, and gave a definite number of vibrations, at our request, on two or three occasions. It felt like a strong, quick shudder passing through it.

Mr. Home now took the accordion in the usual manner, and held it under the table. It was presently sounded, and notes played. During this time Miss B. and Dr. B. got under the table and saw the movement. The gas was now put out and the spirit-lamp lighted. The yellow flame made everything look very ghastly, and quite took the colour out of Mrs. Wm. C.'s coral ornaments. She took off her coral necklace and laid it on the table-cloth, just over the opening in the table, by the spirit-lamp. In a short time something poked up the cloth and moved the corals, repeating the movement two or three times.<sup>1</sup>

[At the moment this occurred I was writing my notes, and only caught sight of the necklace as it was settling down from its first movement. It made one or two slight movements afterwards, and, as I state, it seemed to me as if it had been moved from below. I mentioned this at the time, and was then told by Miss B. and others that the necklace had behaved as is now described by her. Not having seen it myself, I did not alter the statement in my notebook.—W. CROOKES.]

Mr. Home then put the accordion on the floor, and placed both his hands on the table. In a short time we all heard a movement of the accordion under the table, and accordingly Mr. Home placed one hand in Mrs. Wm. C.'s hands, the other in Mrs. W. C.'s hands, and placed both his feet beneath my feet. In this manner it was physically impossible for him to have touched the accordion with hands or feet. The lamp also gave plenty of light to allow all present seeing any movement on his part. The accordion now commenced to sound, and then played several notes and bars.

<sup>1</sup> I remember the circumstances stated in this séance.

I had noticed that the necklace worn by Mrs. Wm. C. looked green. I asked her why her beads were green. She assured me they were her corals, and to convince me the necklace was passed into my hands. Instead of passing the necklace back, I simply put it opposite me in the middle of the table. Almost as soon as I had placed the necklace, it rose in a spiral shape. I called out eagerly to my brother, Dr. B., to look at the extraordinary conduct of the threaded corals, and whilst I was endeavouring to get his attention, the erect necklace quietly subsided in a coil on the table. I have often recalled the incident, and although a sceptic by instinct, this one strange experience has made it impossible for me to doubt the assertions of others whose judgment is clear and whose uprightness is above suspicion.

October, 1889.

ALICE L. BIRD.

I recollect my sister calling out to me, "Look, look at the necklace!" but at that moment my attention was directed elsewhere, and I did not actually see the phenomenon in question.

GEORGE BIRD.

Every one present expressed themselves quite convinced that this result could not possibly have been effected by Mr. Home's agency.

Mr. Wr. C. now said that the accordion was brought up to his knees and pressed against them. He put his hand down and took it by the handle. It then played in his hand, Mr. Home's hands and feet being held by others, as before. Presently, Mr. Wr. C. said that the accordion had left his hand (which he then put on to the table). We could hear it moving about under the table, and then it pressed up against my knees, and on putting my hand down I felt the handle turned into my hand. I held it for a minute, but it did not play. I then gave it to Mr. Home, and it then played in his right hand a tune which Serjt. C. had asked for, "Ye Banks and Braes," &c.

After this a very beautiful piece of music was played. It was remarked, "This must be the music of the spheres." A message was given :—

"This is."

After a little time the music stopped, and we turned the light lower, but still keeping enough to enable us to see plainly all that was going on. The music commenced again strongly, and then Mr. Home brought the accordion over the top of the table and held it opposite to Dr. B. We then all saw it contracting and expanding vigorously, and heard it emitting sounds, Mr. Home, part of this time, supporting the instrument on his little finger-tip by means of a string I had tied round the handle.

Serjt. C. held a flower under the table, with the request that it might be taken and given to a lady. It was soon taken from his hand, and after a considerable time, when the circumstance was almost forgotten, a white object was laid on the edge of the table, between Miss B. and Mr. Wr. C., and she said her dress was pulled very much. As the object moved about, it was seen to be Serjt. C.'s flower. The message then came :—

"We gave it you. A flower."

Mr. Home then went into a trance, spoke a little to Mrs. Wr. C. in a low tone, and then got up. He walked about the room in an undecided sort of way, but finally sat down again, saying it all felt confused, and then woke.

A message was then given :—

"Hands off the table."

We accordingly removed our hands and joined hands all round. In a minute a slight movement of my note-book was heard, and I could see that a volume ("Incidents in My Life"), which was resting on the leaves to keep them down, was gradually sliding over it in jerks about an eighth of an inch at a time. The motion was visible to

all present, and the noise was also plainly heard by every one. Nothing more than this took place, and we soon had the message:—

“We find we have no more power.”

The meeting then broke up.

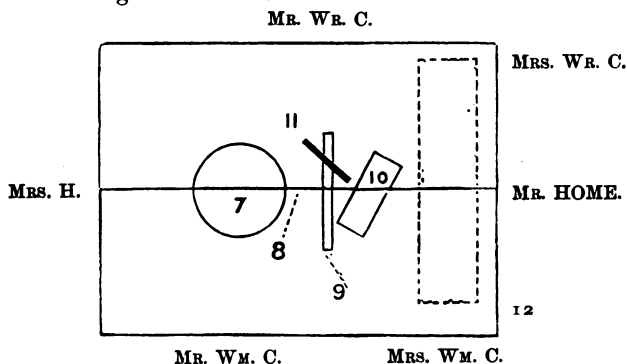
During the latter part of the evening, Mrs. Wm. C., who was sitting near Mr. Home, felt her hands and arm constantly touched and stroked, and the form of fingers was for some time moving about under the cloth close to her. These were felt by myself and Miss A. C., and our hands were patted by them at our request. Mrs. Wm. C. also saw a delicate finger and thumb playing about a rose in Mr. Home's coat, and plucking the petals one at a time, and laying some on the table by her side and giving others to Mrs. W. C. Three times she saw an entire hand rise up and pass quite over her own hands, which were on the table. It was small, plump, and delicately shaped, ending at the wrist in a cloud.

At another time luminous appearances were seen on Mr. Home's head and before his face. All present saw so much, and Mrs. Wm. C. said they were hands.

(VI.) SUNDAY, JULY 16th, 1871. — Sitting at 20, Mornington Road.

*Present*.—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mrs. W. C., Mr. W. C., Mrs. H., Mr. Wm. C., Mrs. Wm. C.

In the following order:—



- 7.—Is a bouquet of flowers which Mrs. Wm. C. and I had brought from Brook Green this evening. They had been given to the servant to arrange, and were brought into the room and put on the table *after* we had all sat down and the séance had commenced.
- 8.—Is the part of the crack in the table subsequently referred to.
- 9.—Is the wooden wand.
- 10.—Is a sheet of note-paper.
- 11.—Is a pencil.

At the first part of the séance the phonautograph was on the table in front of Mr. Home, and I sat or stood at position 12.

On this occasion I asked for the spirits not to rap on the membrane, but to press on it as in the experiment to make the board light and heavy.

This was accordingly done, and ten tracings of curves were taken on the smoked glass :—

No. 1.—Mr. Home's hand on edge of drum.

No. 2. } Mrs. Wr. C.'s fingers on edge of drum, and Mr. Home's

No. 3. } hands touching hers.

No. 4.—Mr. Home's fingers on edge of drum.

No. 5.—Mr. Home's fingers on support not touching the drum.

No. 6.—Mr. Home's fingers touching the membrane. On looking at this I remarked that this curve might have been produced by pressure of the fingers. The message was then given :—

“ Hands off table.”

No. 7.—Mr. Home's hands on the table, no one else touching it.

No. 8.—Mr. Home's hand held over the parchment, fingers pointing downwards quite still.

No. 9.—The same as No. 8.

No. 10.—Mr. Home's fingers touching stand ; not touching the drum or parchment.

After taking these tracings the phonautograph was removed, and we sat down quietly in the positions shown on diagram. The room was sufficiently lighted by means of two spirit-lamps with soda flames placed on the top of the gaselier.

After a few minutes the wooden wand moved a little on the table, gently sliding along. It then raised itself up at one end and then fell down again. Next it lifted up sideways and turned half over. It continued moving about in this manner for several minutes. Mr. Home said he saw a hand over the lath moving it about. No one else saw the hand.

The flowers in the bouquet were moved and rustled about several times.

A message was then given, the answers being sometimes given by raps on the table and sometimes by the wand rising up and striking the table three times in rapid succession :—

“ A prayer.”

Mr. Home took the accordion in the usual manner, and we then were favoured with the most beautiful piece of music I ever heard. It was very solemn and was executed perfectly: the “fingering” of the notes was finer than anything I could imagine. During this piece, which lasted for about ten minutes, we heard a man's rich voice accompanying it in one corner of the room, and a bird whistling and chirping.



Mr. Home then held his hand over the bouquet and shook it (his hand) with a rapid quivering movement.

I asked if the pencil would be taken and a word written on the paper before our eyes. The pencil was moved and lifted up two or three times, but it fell down again. The lath moved up to the pencil and seemed trying to help it, but it was of no use.

A message was given :—

“It is impossible for matter to pass through matter; but we will show you what we can do.”

We waited in silence. Presently Mrs. Wm. C. said she saw a luminous appearance over the bouquet. Mr. Wr. C. said he saw the same, and Mr. Home said he saw a hand moving about.

A piece of ornamental grass about 15 inches long here moved out of the bouquet, and was seen to slowly disappear just in front at the position (8) on the plan, as if it were passing through the table.

Immediately after it had disappeared through the table Mrs. Wm. C. saw a hand appear from beneath the table, between her and Mr. Home, holding the piece of grass. It brought it up to her shoulder, tapped it against her two or three times with a noise audible to all, and then took the grass down on to the floor, where the hand disappeared. Only Mrs. Wm. C. and Mr. Home saw the hand; but we all saw the movements of the piece of grass, which were as I have described.

It was then told us that the grass had been passed through the division in the table. On measuring the diameter of this division, I found it to be barely  $\frac{1}{4}$ th inch, and the piece of grass was far too thick to enable me to force it through without injuring it. Yet it passed through the chink very quietly and smoothly, and did not show the least signs of pressure.

The message was then given by notes on the accordion :—

“God bless you. Good night.”

A parting tune was then played on the accordion, and the séance then broke up at half-past eleven.

(VII.) SUNDAY, JULY 30th, 1871.—Sitting at 20, Mornington Road.

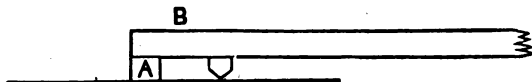
*Present*.—Mr. D. D. Home, Mr. Wm. C., Mrs. Wm. C., Mrs. H., Mr. Wr. C., Mrs. Wr. C., Mrs. L., Miss A. C., Mr. H. C., Mr. T., and at 11 P.M. Lord A.

In the dining-room round the dining-table.

During the former part of the evening the gas was lighted; during the latter part the room was illuminated by two spirit-lamps.

The first experiment tried was the alteration of the weight of the board by means of the improved apparatus, by which the movements are registered on smoked glass. In order to meet Mr. G.'s objection, the short end of the board was firmly supported on a foot (a) in

such a manner that no amount of pressure of the hands at (b) produced any appreciable movement of the long end. The adjustments



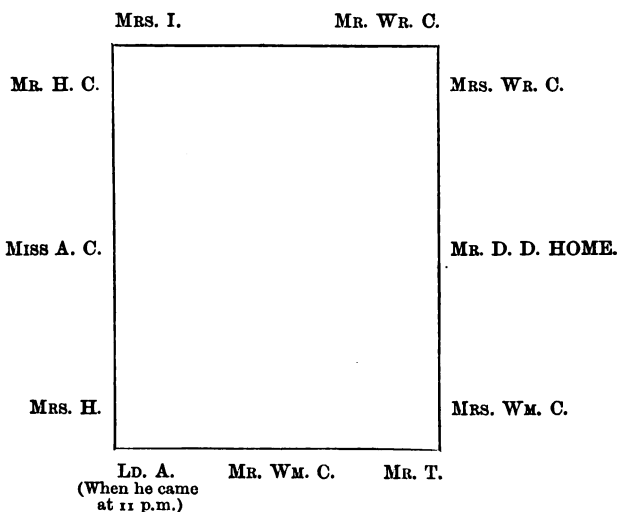
were made and well tested by myself before Mr. Home entered the room.

I took Mr. Home's two hands and placed them myself in the proper position on the board, the tips of his fingers being (at B) just half-way from the extremity to the fulcrum. Mrs. Wm. C., who was sitting next to Mr. Home, and by the side of the apparatus, watched his hands the whole time, and I also watched him whilst the plate of glass was moving. Six plates were tried, and good results obtained. The experiments were not tried directly one after the other, but when all was ready Mr. Home generally told me when to set the clock going, saying that he felt an influence on the instrument, or that he saw a spirit standing near. On one or two occasions loud raps were heard on the board, and the signal to set the clock going was given, at my request, by three raps. The board sometimes swayed sideways as well as vertically.

During the progress of one of these experiments, the chair in which I had been sitting, which was standing near the apparatus, was seen to move up close to the table.

The register of the index showed a maximum pull of 2 lb.

The apparatus was removed, and we took our seats round the table in the following positions:—



Raps occurred in different parts of the table when I placed my hands there. Raps were then given on the wooden lath when Mr. Home had hold of one end.

The accordion was held by Mr. Home in the usual position under the table. Whilst it played, Mrs. I. looked beneath and saw it playing. Mr. Home removed his hand altogether from it, and held both hands above the table. During this, Mrs. I. said she saw a luminous hand playing the accordion.

The gas was now turned out, and three spirit-lamps were lighted.

Loud raps were heard, and the planchette moved across a sheet of paper, leaving a mark with the pencil.

The lath moved some inches.

The accordion, which had been left by Mr. Home under the table, now began to play and move about without any one touching it. It dropped on to my foot, then dragged itself away, playing all the time, and went to Mrs. I. It got on to her knees.

Mr. Home then took it in his hand, where it played, and delivered the following message, by chords, in the usual way:—

“Our joy and thankfulness to have been allowed to make our presence manifest. We thank you for your patience, and we thank God for His love.”

Mr. Home got up and stood behind, in full view of all, holding the accordion out at arm's length. We all saw it expanding and contracting, and heard it playing a melody. Mr. Home then left go of the accordion, which went behind his back and there continued to play; his feet being visible, and also his two hands, which were in front of him.

Mr. Home then walked to the open space in the room between Mrs. I.'s chair and the sideboard, and stood there upright and quiet. He then said, “I'm rising, I'm rising;” when we all saw him rise from the ground slowly to a height of about six inches, remain there for about ten seconds, and then slowly descend. From my position I could not see his feet, but I distinctly saw his head, projected against the opposite wall, rise up, and Mr. Wr. C., who was sitting near where Mr. Home was, said that his feet were in the air. There was no stool or other thing near which could have aided him. Moreover, the movement was a smooth, continuous glide upwards.

Whilst this was going on we heard the accordion fall heavily to the ground. It had been suspended in the air behind the chair where Mr. Home had been sitting. When it fell Mr. Home was about ten feet from it.

Mr. Home still standing behind Mrs. I. and Mr. Wr. C., the accordion was both seen and heard to move about behind him without his hands touching it. It then played a tune without contact, and floating in the air.

Mr. Home then took the accordion in one hand, and held it out so that we could all see it (he was still standing up behind Mrs. I.

and Mr. Wr. C.). We then saw the accordion expand and contract, and heard a tune played. Mrs. Wm. C. and Mr. Home saw a light on the lower part of the accordion, where the keys were, and we then heard and saw the keys clicked and depressed one after the other, fairly and deliberately, as if to show us that the power doing it, although invisible (or nearly so), to us, had full control over the instrument.

A beautiful tune was then played whilst Mr. Home was standing up holding the accordion out in full view of every one.

Mr. Home then came round behind me, and telling me to hold my left arm out, placed the accordion under my arm, the keys hanging down, and the upper part pressing upwards against my upper arm. He then left go, and the accordion remained there. He then placed his two hands one on each shoulder. In this position, no one touching the accordion but myself, and every one noticing what was taking place, the instrument played notes, but no tune.

Mr. Home then sat down in his chair, and we were told by raps to open the table about an inch or an inch and a half.

Mr. T. touched the point of the lath, when raps immediately came on it.

The planchette, which was on the table resting on a sheet of paper, now moved a few inches.

Sounds were heard on the accordion, which was on the floor, not held by Mr. Home.

The corner of the paper next to Mrs. Wm. C. (on which the planchette was standing) moved up and down. (These three last phenomena were going on simultaneously.)

I felt something touch my knee; it then went to Mrs. I., then to Miss A. C.

Whilst this was going on I held the bell under the table, and it was taken from me and rung round beneath. It was then given to Mrs. I. by a hand which she described as soft and warm.

The lath was now seen to move about a little.

Mrs. Wm. C. saw a hand and fingers touching the flower in Mr. Home's button-hole. The flower was then taken by the hand and given to Mrs. I., and the green leaf was in a similar manner given to Mr. T.

Mrs. Wm. C. and Mr. Home saw the hand doing this, the others only saw the flower and leaf moving through the air.

Mrs. Wm. C. held a rose below the table; it was touched and then taken.

The sound as of a drum was heard on the accordion.

The lath lifted itself up on its edge, then reared itself upon one end and fell down. It then floated up four inches above the table, and moved quite round the circle, pointing to Mrs. Wm. C. It then rose up and passed over our heads outside the circle.

The planchette moved about a good deal, marking the paper.

The cloth was dragged along the table.

Whilst the lath was moving round the circle, the accordion played a tune in Mr. Home's hand whilst Mrs. Wm. C.'s hand was also on it.

Mrs. Wm. C. put her hand near the lath, when it came up to it, and moved about it very much.

The paper on which the planchette was resting moved about us as if by a hand. Many present saw a hand doing it. (Mr. Home and Mrs. Wm. C. saw this hand.)

Mr. H. C. saw a luminous hand come up between Mr. Home and Mrs. Wm. C.

Some time during the evening Mrs. Wm. C.'s handkerchief, which had been in her pocket, was taken out of it by a hand.

I saw something white moving about in the further corner of the room (diagonal to door) under a chair. On my remarking this, a message was given by raps :—

“ William ! take it.”

On getting up and taking it, I saw that it was Mrs. Wm. C.'s pocket-handkerchief tied in a knot, and having the stalk of the rose which had been taken from her tied up in it. The place where I picked up the handkerchief was fifteen feet from where she had been sitting.

A glass water-bottle which was on the table now floated up and rapped against the planchette.

Mr. Home said : “ I see a face. I see Philip's face. Philip ! Brother ! ”

The water and tumbler now rose up together, and we had answers to questions by their tapping together whilst floating in the air about eight inches above the table, and moving backwards and forwards from one to the other of the circle.

Mr. H. C. said a hand was tickling his knee.

A finger was protruded up the opening of the table between Miss A. C. and the water-bottle.

Miss A. C., Mr. H. C., and Mrs. I. were then touched.

Fingers came up the opening of the table a second time and waved about.

The lath, which on its last excursion had settled in front of the further window, quite away from the circle, now moved along the floor four or five times very noisily. It then came up to Mr. T., and passed into the circle over his shoulder. It settled on the table and then rose up again, pointing to Mrs. Wm. C.'s mouth.

The lath then went to the water-bottle and pushed it several times nearly over, to move it away from the opening in the table. The lath then went endways down the opening.

The tumbler moved about a little.

The lath moved up through the opening in the table and answered “ Yes ” and “ No ” to questions, by bobbing up and down three times or once ;

A hand was seen by some, and a luminous cloud by others, pulling the flowers about which were in a stand on the table. A flower was then seen to be carried deliberately and given to Mrs. Wm. C.

Another flower was taken by the hand and brought over to Mrs. Wm. C. ; it was dropped between her and Mr. Home.

Raps then said :—

“We must go.”

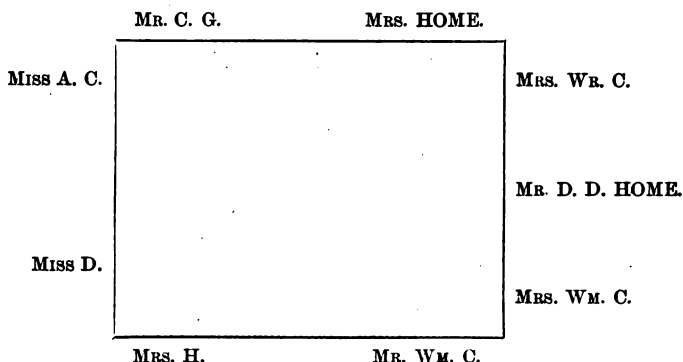
The raps then commenced loudly all over the room, and got fainter and fainter until they became inaudible.

The séance then broke up.

(VIII.) SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25th, 1871.—Sitting at 20, Mornington Road. From 9.15 P.M. to 11.30 P.M.

In the dining-room round the dining-table; no leaf in.

*Present :—*



On the table were two glass troughs of flowers, accordion, paper, planchette, some marked pieces of paper, pencils, hand-bell, spirit-lamps, matches, &c. A cloth was on. The lath was on the table.

There was a good fire in the room, which, however, got low towards the end of the sitting, and a gas-light was burning during the greater part of the time. When that was put out, there was still light enough in the room from the fire and the street to enable us to distinguish each other, and see the objects on the table.

We had scarcely sat down a minute when raps were heard from different parts of the table; a strong vibration of our chairs and the table was felt, and sounds like thumps on the floor were heard. A curious metallic tapping sound was heard on the iron screw of the table.

A message :—“*Selfish*,” in reply to a remark I made.

A rustling was heard on the table, and one of the glass flower-troughs was seen to move along by jerks, till it had travelled about two inches and had got a little on to a large sheet of paper. This movement continued whilst all were watching it. Mr. Home’s hands were quite in front of him.

The wooden lath was then seen to slide an inch or so backwards and forwards.

Mr. Home took the accordion in the usual manner, holding it under the table. It immediately began to sound. Mr. Home then brought it from under the table (he said it appeared to move of its

own accord, dragging his hand after it), playing all the time, and at last held it hanging down at the back of his chair in a very constrained attitude, his feet being under the table and his other hand on the table. In this position the instrument played chords and separate notes, but not any definite tune. The sounds on it became louder, and the table began to vibrate; this got stronger and stronger, until the noise of the accordion playing simple chords was very great, whilst the table actually jumped up and down, keeping accurate time with the music. This became so violent that it might have been heard all over the house. It ceased suddenly and in a minute recommenced.

Miss D. said: "Dear spirits, how pleased you would have been had you lived to witness the progress Spiritualism is now making." Immediately a message was given in reply:—

"We are not dead!"

Mr. Home brought the accordion back to under the table, when it sounded notes again. There was a sound as of a man's bass voice accompanying it. On mentioning this, one note, "No," was given, and the musical bar repeated several times slowly, till we found out that it was caused by a peculiar discord played on a bass note. On finding this out, the instrument burst out with its usual jubilant bar.

Miss D. saying that she felt touched, I asked if we might get some direct writing. Two raps were given. I asked Miss D. to put the marked sheets of paper and pencil under the table by her feet, and requested that something might be written on it.

Three raps.

The power now seemed to go to the lath; it was lifted up several times at alternate ends to a height of several inches, and then floated quite above the table.

The planchette moved irregularly along the paper, making a mark with the pencil.

Some of those who were present said they saw a luminous hand touching the paper. I saw the paper raised up at the side away from Mr. Home.

I felt touched strongly on the knee by something feeling like fingers. On putting my hand down, a sheet of paper was put into it. I said, "Is anything written on it?"

"Yes."

It being too dark to see what was written, I asked that it might be told me by raps, and on repeating the alphabet I got the following:—

"Rctojdourdanial."

On striking a light the following was seen neatly written:—

R. C. to J. D.  
Our Daniel.

Miss D. said the R. C. was Robert Chambers, whilst J. D. were the initials of her own name.

As the paper was a sheet I had marked, and it was free from any mark when put under the table, whilst no one had moved from the table in the meantime, this was as striking a manifestation as I had ever seen.

Mrs. Home, who for some time past had said a hand was holding her hand, now said that the hand was under her dress. Each of us in turn went round and felt it. To me it felt very small, and I could not distinguish any form which I could be certain was a hand. Mrs. Wm. C., who went next, said it was at first very small, but it seemed to grow large as she felt it until it was exactly like a large hand, the knuckles and fingers being very distinct. The hand remained with Mrs. Home for half an hour at least. On asking for the name of the hand which had held hers, the name

“Alexandrine”

was spelt out.

A sound like the snapping of fingers was heard. On speaking of this, it was repeated at our request in different parts of the room.

The wooden lath which was lying just in front of me appeared to move slightly, whereupon I leaned forward and watched it intently. It rose up about half an inch, then sank down, and afterwards turned up on one end till it was upright, and then descended on the other side till it touched one of Mr. Home's hands. One end remained all the time on the table whilst the other end described a semicircle. The movement was very deliberate. The lath then moved away from Mr. Home's hands and laid itself across the planchette. Both it and the planchette moved slightly. The lath then moved off and stood quite upright on the table. It then slowly descended.

The accordion, which had been for some time quiet under the table, now was heard to sound and move about. Presently Miss D. felt it coming to her and push against her knees.

The window curtains at the end of the room farthest from the door, and seven feet from where Mr. Home was sitting, were seen to move about. They opened in the centre for a space of about a foot, exactly as if a man had divided them with his hands. Mr. Home said he saw a dark form standing in front of the window moving the curtains, and Mrs. Wm. C. and Mr. C. G. also said they saw a shadow of a form. The form was then seen to go behind one curtain and move it outwards into the room for a distance of about eighteen inches. This was repeated several times.

The wooden lath now rose from the table and rested one end on my knuckles, the other end being on the table. It then rose up and tapped me several times. Questions which I put were answered “Yes” or “No” in this manner. I said, “Do you know the Morse alphabet?” “Yes.” “Could you give me a message by it?” “Yes.” As soon as this was rapped out, the lath commenced rapping my knuckles in long and short taps, in a manner exactly resembling a



"Morse" message. My knowledge of the code and of reading by sound is not sufficient to enable me to say positively that it was a message, but it sounded exactly like one; the long and short taps and the pauses were exactly similar, and Mr. C. G., who has had practice with the Morse code, feels almost certain that it was so.

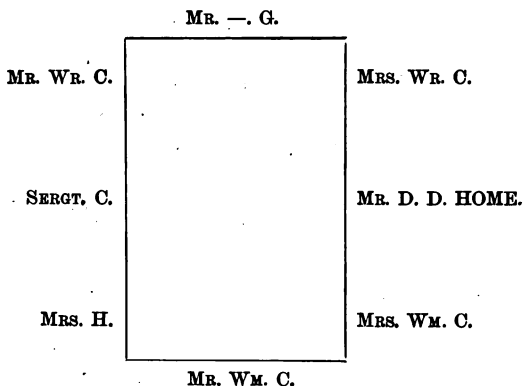
Afterwards, at my request, the Morse alphabet was given distinctly by taps on the table. During this time Mrs. Wm. C. was standing on the other side of the table by Mrs. Home. Her chair between me and Mr. Home was empty, and I could see Mr. Home's hands resting quietly on the table in front of him.

Mr. Home went into a trance, and addressed several of us in turn.

The séance ended at about 11.30 P.M.

(IX.) TUESDAY, APRIL 16th, 1872.—Sitting at 20, Mornington Road. From 8.50 P.M.

*Present*, in the following order :—



On the table were flowers, an accordion, a lath, a bell, paper, and pencils.

*Phenomena.*—Creaks were heard followed by a trembling of the table and chairs.

The table gently moved from Mr. Wr. C. to Mr. Home.

Raps were heard on different parts of the table.

Mr. — G. was under the table when the movements were going on. There was vibration and knocks on the floor. The table moved six inches from Mr. — G. to me; and there was a strong trembling of the table.

A shower of loud ticks by Mr. — G. was heard, and thumps as of a foot on the floor.

The table trembled two times at Mr. — G.'s request, then twice, and a third time after an interval. This was done several times.

The table became light and heavy. Mr. — G. tested it, and there was no mistake.

There were strong movements of the table when Mr. — G. was under it.

Mr. Home's chair moved back six inches.

The accordion was taken by Mr. Home in the usual manner and sounded. Mr. —. G. looked under whilst it was expanding and contracting.

We were speaking of the music when a message was given :—

“ It comes from the heart. A hymn of praise.”

After which beautiful sacred music was played.

The bell was taken from Mrs. Wm. C. and tinkled under the table for some time. It was thrown down close to Mr. —. G., who took it.

The accordion was laid down under the table by Serjt. C. and played a few notes when all hands were on the table. Mrs. Wm. C. put her feet on Mr. Home's. A big hand pushed Mrs. Wm. C.'s feet away. The accordion played and then pushed into Mr. —. G.'s hand. Mr. —. G. held it for some time, but there was no sound, and it was given to Mr. Home.

Mrs. Wr. C.'s dress was pulled round, while Mr. —. G. was looking on. Mrs. Wr. C. put her feet touching Mr. —. G.'s.

The accordion played in Mr. Home's hands. He said he felt a touch, on which there were five raps, and a message came :—

“ We did.”

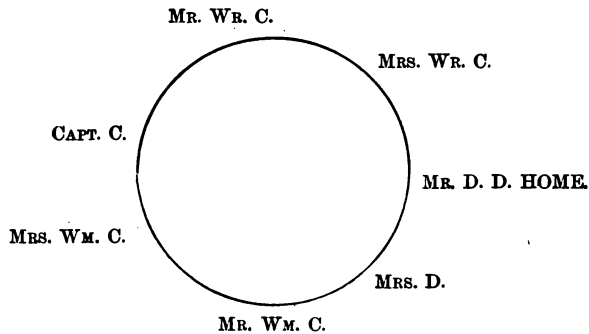
“ The Last Rose of Summer ” was played exquisitely. Mr. Home then put the accordion down. There was quietness for a minute, followed by movements of the table, and a message was given :—

“ We have no more power.”

(X.) SUNDAY, APRIL 21st, 1872.—Sitting at 24, Molcombe Street.

*Present* :—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mrs. D., Capt. C., Mr. and Mrs. Wm. C., Mr. and Mrs. Wr. C.

In the drawing-room, round the centre table.



*Phenomena.*—Strong vibrations of the cabinet behind Mr. Home; continuous raps on the table; very strong vibrations of the cabinet. Then a long silence. Mr. Home went to the piano.

On his return the vibrations recommenced; then there were powerful raps on the table in front of me.

There were thumps on the table and then on the floor.

I was touched on the knee.

I was touched again on the knee. The table then rattled about so violently that I could not write.

Mr. Home took the accordion in the usual manner. It played a tune.

Mrs. D.'s handkerchief was taken from her lap by a hand visible to her and Mr. Home, the accordion playing beautifully all the time. A message was given:—

“Try less light.”

The handkerchief moved about along the floor, visible to all.

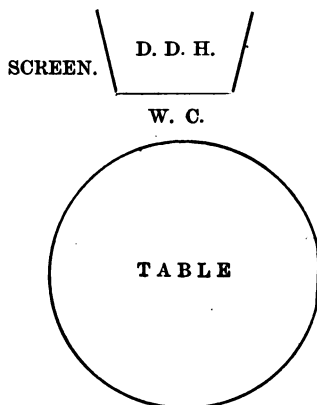
Mr. Home nearly disappeared under the table in a curious attitude, then he was (still in his chair) wheeled out from under the table, still in the same attitude, his feet out in front off the ground. He was then sitting almost horizontally, his shoulders resting on his chair.

He asked Mrs. Wr. C. to remove the chair from under him, as it was not supporting him. He was then seen to be sitting in the air supported by nothing visible.

Then Mr. Home rested the extreme top of his head on a chair and his feet on the sofa. He said he felt supported in the middle very comfortably. The chair then moved away of its own accord, and Mr. Home rested flat on the floor behind Mrs. Wr. C.

A stool then moved up from behind Mrs. Wr. C. to between her and Mr. Home.

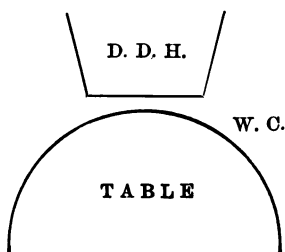
Mr. Home then got up, and after walking about the room, went to a large glass screen and brought it close up to me, and opened it out thus:—



Mr. Home then put his hands on the screen, and we had raps on the glass. (The gas was turned brightly up during these experiments.)

Then Mr. Home put his hand on one leaf of the screen, and I put my hand where I chose on the other leaf. Raps came from under my hand.

The screen was then put thus :—



Mr. Home stood behind the screen and had the gas-light shining full on him. He rested his two hands lightly on the top of the centre leaf of the screen. In this position we had the table-cloth moved, raps on the table in front of the screen, and raps on the glass leaves (either one at request). A lady's dress was pulled, and the chairs were shaken.

The screen was then folded up and laid horizontally on two chairs, so as to form a glass table. Mr. Home sat at one side and I sat at the other side, by ourselves. The light was very good, and the whole of his legs and feet were easily seen through the screen.

Many experiments were then tried on this glass table. Raps came from it at my request where I desired. It was vibrated; and once raps came when Mr. Home was not touching it.

The light was then lowered and the screen put aside.

The cushion from the sofa floated off it and came between Mr. Home and Mrs. W. C.

Mr. Home took the accordion, and it played "Auld Lang Syne."

Some one was seen standing behind Mrs. Wm. C.

Mrs. Wm. C. had a severe pain in her head. Mr. Home came behind her and mesmerised her, and the pain went.

A message came to Mrs. W. C.

Nothing more took place after this.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9th, 1871.—Sitting at 81, South Audley Street. From 9 to 11 P.M.

*Present*.—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Miss D., Mrs. G., Mr. O. R., Mr. W. F., Mrs. W. F., Mr. Crookes.

In the front drawing-room, at a loo-table on centre pillar and three feet, diameter three feet, weight 32 lb.; cloth on (occasionally turned up to give light below).

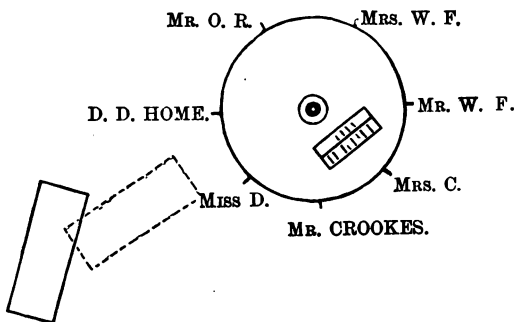
One candle on table, two on mantelpiece, one on side-table. Towards end of the sitting (during the fire-test) the candle on the

table and one on the mantelpiece were put out. An accordion was on the table.

A wood fire, somewhat dull, in the grate.

Temperature very comfortable all the evening.

Order of sitting:—



A small sofa-table stood about two feet from Miss D. and Mr. Home, in the position shown in the diagram. Miss D. commenced by reading aloud a few extracts from Robert Chambers's introduction to Mr. Home's book, "Incidents of My Life."

*Phenomena.*—The table tilted several times in four or five directions at an angle of about 25 degrees, and kept inclined sufficiently long for those who wished to look under with a candle, and examine how the hands of Mr. Home and the others present were touching it. Sometimes it stood on two legs, and sometimes it was balanced on one. Mr. Crookes, who had brought a spring-balance in his pocket, was now invited by Mr. Home to try an experiment in the alteration of weight.

As it would have been inconvenient, without disturbing the sitting, to have experimented on the total weight of the table, the balance was hooked under one edge of the table, and the force required to tilt it measured.

*Experiment 1.*—"Be light." An upward pull of 21b. required to lift one of the feet off the ground, all hands lightly touching the top of the table.

*Experiment 2.*—"Be heavy." As soon as this was said, the table creaked, shuddered, and appeared to settle itself firmly into the floor. The effect was as if the power of a gigantic electro-magnet had been suddenly turned on, the table constituting the armature. All hands were, as before, lightly touching the upper surface of the table with their fingers. A force of 36 lb. was now required to raise the foot of the table from the floor. The experimentalist lifted it up and down four or five times, and the index of the balance kept pretty constant at 36 lb., not varying more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. Whilst this was going on, each person's hands were noticed. They were touching the table so lightly that their aggregate downward pressure could

Y

not have been many ounces. Mr. Home once lifted his hands for a moment quite off the table. His feet were tucked back under his chair the whole time.

*Experiment 3.*—"Be light." Conditions the same as before. An upward pull of 7 lb. required to tilt the table.

*Experiment 4.*—"Be heavy." The same creaking noise as in Experiment 2 was again heard. Every person (except Mr. O. R. and Mr. Crookes, who was standing up trying the experiment) put the ends of the fingers *underneath* the table top, the palms being upwards and the thumbs visible, so that, if any force were unconsciously exerted, it should tend to diminish the weight. At the same time Mr. O. R. took a candle and stooped under the table to see that no one was touching the legs of the table with their knees or feet. Mr. Crookes also stooped down occasionally to verify Mr. R.'s statement that all was fair beneath. Upon applying the spring-balance, it was announced that the table began to rise at 45 lb. Immediately this was said, Mr. Crookes felt an increase of weight, and, after a few trials, the pull was increased to 48 lb., at which point the index stood steady, the leg of the table being about three inches off the floor.

*Experiment 5.*—"Be heavy." The conditions were the same as before, a little more care being taken by the sitters to keep their feet well tucked under their chairs. Hands touching the under side of the table top as before. The index of the balance rose steadily, without the table moving in the least, until it pointed to 46 lb. At this point the table rose an inch, when the hook of the balance slipped off, and the table returned to its place with a crash. The iron hook had bent out sufficiently to prevent it holding the table firmly any longer, so the experiments were obliged to be discontinued.

(After the séance was over, the normal weight of the table was taken. Its total weight was 32 lb. In order to tilt it in the manner described in the experiments, a pull of 8 lb. was required. When lifted straight up at three equidistant points, the spring-balance being at one point, a pull of 10 lb. was required. The accuracy of the balance could be depended on to about  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb., not more.)

Raps were heard from different parts of the table and the floor, and the table quivered rapidly several times.

Mr. Home appeared slightly convulsed about the arms and body. Suddenly he said aloud, "Robert Chambers is here; I feel him." Three loud raps were immediately heard from a small sofa table about two feet behind Miss D., and this table then slowly glided up to within five inches of Miss D. and Mr. Home. The movement was very steady and noiseless, and occupied about five seconds in going the distance of twenty inches. When it stopped, Mr. Home drew attention to the fact that both his feet were under his chair and all hands were on the table. He moved a little nearer to Mr. O. R., and turned his legs and feet as far away from the table as he

could, asking the sitters to make themselves quite certain that he could not have produced the movement of the table. When this was being noticed, the small table again moved, this time slowly, and a quarter of an inch at a time, until it was again close to Mr. Home and Miss D.

A flower in a glass standing in the centre of the small table was moved, but not taken out of the glass.

Mr. Home and then Miss D. said they felt touched under the table. The sleeve of Miss D.'s dress was pulled up and down several times, in full view of all present. Mr. Home said he saw a hand doing it. No one else saw this; but Miss D. felt a hand, which, however, was invisible, put on her wrist immediately after.

Mr. Home held the accordion under the table by one hand, letting the keyed end hang downwards. Presently it commenced to sound, and then played "Ye Banks and Braes," &c., and other airs, and imitated an echo very beautifully. Whilst it was playing in Mr. Home's hand (his other hand being quietly on the table), the other gentlemen looked under the table to see what was going on. Mr. Crookes took particular notice that when the instrument was playing, Mr. Home held it tightly at the end opposite the keys; that Mr. Home's feet had boots on, and were both quiet, at some distance from the instrument, and that, although the keyed end was rising and falling vigorously, and the keys moving as the music required, no hand, strings, wires, or anything else could be seen touching that end.

Mr. O. R. then held the accordion by the plain end, Mr. Home touching it at the same time. Presently it began to move, and then commenced to play. Mr. Home then moved his hand away, and the instrument continued playing for a short time in Mr. R.'s hand, both of Mr. Home's hands being then above the table.

Some questions were then asked, and answers were given by raps and notes on the accordion. The alphabet being called for by five raps, the following message was spelled out:—"It is a glorious truth. It was the solace of my earth life, and the triumph over the change called death. Robert Chambers."

A private message to Miss D. was then given in the same manner.

The table was then tilted several times, as before, and once rose completely off the ground to a height of about three inches.

Mr. Home sank back in his chair with his eyes closed, and remained still for a few minutes. He then rose up in a trance, and made signs for his eyes to be blindfolded. This was done. He walked about the room in an undecided sort of manner, came up to each of the sitters, and made some remark to them. He went to the candle on a side-table (close to the large table) and passed his fingers backwards and forwards through the flame several times so slowly that they must have been severely burnt under ordinary circumstances. He then held his fingers up, smiled and nodded, as if pleased, took up a fine cambric handkerchief belonging to Miss D.,

folded it up on his right hand, and went to the fire. Here he threw off the bandage from his eyes, and lifted a piece of red-hot charcoal from the centre and deposited it on the folded cambric. Bringing it across the room, he told us to put out the candle which was on the table, knelt down close to Mrs. W. F., and spoke to her about it in a low voice. Occasionally he fanned the coal to a white heat with his breath. Coming a little further round the room, he spoke to Miss D., saying, "We shall have to burn a very small hole in the handkerchief. We have a reason for this which you do not see." Presently he took the coal back to the fire and handed the handkerchief to Miss D. A small hole, about half an inch in diameter, was burnt in the centre, and there were two small points near it, but it was not even singed anywhere else. (Mr. Crookes took the handkerchief away with him, and on testing it in his laboratory, found that it had not undergone the slightest chemical preparation which could have rendered it fireproof.)

Mr. Home again went to the fire, and after stirring the hot coal about with his hand, took out a red-hot piece nearly as big as an orange, and putting it on his right hand, covered it over with his left hand so as to almost completely enclose it, and then blew into the small furnace thus extemporised until the lump of charcoal was nearly white-hot, and then drew Mr. Crookes' attention to the lambent flame which was flickering over the coal and licking round his fingers. He fell on his knees, looked up in a reverent manner, held up the coal in front, and said, "Is not God good? Are not His laws wonderful?"

Going again to the fire, he took out another hot coal with his hand, and holding it up, said to Mr. Crookes, "Is not that a beautiful large bit, William? We want to bring that to you. Pay no attention at present." The coal, however, was not brought. Mr. Home said, "The power is going," and soon came back to his chair and woke up.

Mr. O. R., having an appointment, had to leave at eleven o'clock. After this nothing particular took place.

The long series of séances with Messrs. Crookes, Huggins, Cox, &c., had a very exhausting and injurious effect on Mr. Home's health. "After witnessing the painful state of nervous and bodily prostration in which some of these experiments have left Mr. Home," wrote the first-named inquirer (*Quarterly Journal of Science*, October, 1871), "after seeing him lying in an almost fainting condition on the floor, pale and speechless, I could scarcely doubt that the evolution of psychic force is accompanied by a corresponding drain on vital force."



From Ryde, where he had gone for a few days to recruit his health, Home wrote in the summer of 1871 to Mrs. S. C. Hall :—" I have been here the past ten days doing what I can to get up my strength, for I was well nigh exhausted when I left London. I have no doubt that the scientific séances have done good, but they were very trying to my nervous system. The continual effort to be passive became a kind of nightmare."

The scientific séances in London were both preceded and followed by séances of the same description at St. Petersburg. The first Russian man of science who investigated the phenomena occurring in the presence of Home was Professor von Boutlerow, Professor of Chemistry at the University of St. Petersburg, a chemist as distinguished as Mr. Crookes, and author of "*Lehrbuch der Organischen Chemie*." He was followed by his colleague Wagner, Professor of Natural History in the same university.

Von Boutlerow commenced his investigations early in 1871, shortly after the séances that Mr. Home had held with the Emperor at the Winter Palace.<sup>1</sup> This winter visit of Home to Russia had been partly undertaken in consequence of the lawsuit in which he had been forced to engage concerning the little fortune of his late wife. Although that fortune incontestably belonged to him, the heiress of Count Koucheleff-Besborodka—the Countess M. Pouchkine—persisted in disputing the just claims of Home. At length, after years of anxieties and delays, the final judgment in the long proceedings was pronounced, and Mr. Home's rights were vindicated by the Russian courts.

Writing from Ems in 1870, when many anxieties were weighing on him, and his broken health was telling of their effect, he gives Mr. and Mrs. Hall particulars of an accidental meeting with the Emperor Alexander II., and relates the gracious manner in which his Majesty, through Count Schouvaloff, took

<sup>1</sup> See "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," pp. 363, 364.

occasion to prove his interest in all that concerned Mr. Home:—

“HOTEL DE FRANCE, EMS, May 23, 1870.

“MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I think I am awake, but am not quite sure. The journey did indeed wear me out. I was very weary before leaving London, and on arriving here I went to bed at once. The next day I wrote to the Count Schouvaloff, to tell him of my arrival; but the servant came back saying he had gone to Wiesbaden for the day; so I went to bed again. I came down just in time to dine at six o'clock, and after dinner was standing on the steps deciding which way I should go for a walk. There were two or three persons standing there; and all at once some one said, ‘Here comes the Emperor on horseback.’ He was even then almost by the door, and as I took off my hat his eye caught mine, and the kind smile he has came over his face. ‘Oh, Monsieur Home, depuis quand êtes vous arrivé?’ I told him the evening previous; and he said, ‘Au revoir!’ and rode on. Of course, I was now an object of general attention. I don’t think even yet they know who I am. About an hour after this I met him as he was walking back, and told him I wanted to talk business with him. He smiled, and said I must see Schouvaloff for that. I saw Schouvaloff yesterday, and he gave me an audience for this morning at twelve. I am to see the Emperor either this evening or to-morrow evening.

“Now comes my trouble. On Friday last, the Count Koucheleff, my brother-in-law, was found a corpse in his carriage, and now my lawsuit becomes more and more intricate. Count Schouvaloff has in the most kind way interested himself, and to-morrow a courier goes to Petersburg with business papers for me. It was the providence of God to send me here just at this time.”

Professors von Boutlerow and Wagner both published accounts of their experiences at séances with Mr. Home during the years 1871 and 1872. I believe that these narratives have never been translated, and that I am now placing them before the English reader for the first time.

The testimony of Von Boutlerow appeared, in the first instance, in the *Russian Messenger* (*Russky Vesnik*), a literary review of St. Petersburg. The article is too lengthy for me to translate here in full, and I have confined myself to the portions that more directly relate to Home. The remaining pages are partly devoted by Von Boutlerow to a detailed description of the gradual

transition in his mind from scepticism to perplexity, and from perplexity to full conviction.

"In 1871 and 1872," wrote Von Boutlerow, "Mr. Home passed some months at St. Petersburg. I have had many opportunities of being present at his séances, and all I have seen was of a nature to leave me convinced of the reality of the phenomena and of the complete absence of charlatanism on the part of Home. I do not, of course, comprehend in this declaration the persons who counterfeit the manifestations in order to turn them to account for purposes of juggling or imposture. Many persons assert that these manifestations are nothing but tricks; but when the skilful conjuror Bosco conversed on this subject with Trollope, he entirely repudiated the possibility of producing by means of his art the phenomena witnessed in presence of Home. Carpenter, too, perceived very clearly that his 'unconscious cerebration' was powerless to explain the rising of tables in the air, or the movement of objects without contact; and in order to find a way out of his difficulty he simply rejected that category of phenomena, ignoring the researches of others, and not scrupling to assume that the knowledge of how to investigate without being duped belonged only to himself.

"The séances of Home generally commence with raps, feeble at first, and gradually becoming louder. They are of a very varied character, and are heard not only on the table, but on walls, floor, &c. It has happened to me to witness the development of communications by means of raps struck in different parts of the room in response to the spelling of the French alphabet. I have also remained under the table with a light in my hand, and have heard them the while sounding distinctly on the table above my head; while, at the same time, my observations certified me of the immobility of Home, whose hands were resting on the table.

"The first time when I observed the phenomenon of an alteration of weight was in February, 1871, at a séance of Home with Aksakoff. This phenomenon was investigated with much care, and the evidence of its reality was convincing. We were ten in number, seated around a large and heavy table, in a well-lighted apartment. Each of us successively verified the fact that the table would become light or heavy at request. At the following séance, also held with Aksakoff, I presented myself with a dynamometer. The weight of the table before the séance was 100 lb. On my desiring, in the course of the séance, that it should become light, the dynamometer first marked 50 lb., and afterwards the tension on it diminished to 35 lb., and finally to 30 lb. Immediately afterwards, in response to the expression of my wish that the table should become heavy, the tension increased to 145 lb. The alteration in the resistance of the weight fluctuated between the limits of a minimum of 30 lb. and a maximum of 150 lb. It was impossible for Home to render.

the table heavier by any pressure on it,<sup>1</sup> and he only touched it with the tips of his fingers; but, even admitting that it had been in his power, how would such pressure explain the fact of the table immediately afterwards becoming much lighter than its normal weight? the evident inaction of Home, who sat in full light, being visible to all the persons present.

"The first occasion on which I saw movement without contact was at a séance of Home in a brilliantly-lit drawing-room; the silk dress of a lady seated between Mr. Home and myself was forcibly shaken. In order the better to observe the fact, I knelt down and verified past doubt the movement which was occurring close under my eyes, observing at the same time the attitude of Home. I also saw, at another of his séances, which was held in my own house, the movement without contact of an object much heavier than a silk skirt. This was the arm-chair of my study, which I saw move untouched up to the table at which we were seated, and after having approached it, make a detour in order to fix itself in a vacant space between Mr. Home and another person. A moment afterwards, Home took a hand-bell which was on the table, and held it near the edge of the table and full in view. He presently relinquished his hold, and the bell remained suspended in the air, isolated from all contact. The persons seated near could watch it moving in space; and as for myself, who sat opposite Home, by rising from my seat I was also enabled to follow its movements. It finished by descending and placing itself on Home's knees; but presently, without having been touched, it rose anew in the air and settled on the arm-chair, which had moved forward untouched, and was now standing before our table. Another evening, when I found myself in Home's company at the house of a relative, and without there being any question of a séance, we were surprised, in the middle of our conversation, to hear raps struck on the table, and also on an object which, being in metal, gave forth the sounds very distinctly. This unexpected manifestation decided us to hold a séance—in full light, like all the others. Hardly were we seated when manifestations commenced with great power and in great variety; finally, a small table which was standing at the other end of the apartment, in a corner opposite Home, quitted its place of itself, and advanced towards us where we were sitting.

"As for touches, I have felt them repeatedly and very distinctly during séances with Home, and I have often had objects taken from my hands and transported to other persons present at the séance. A ring was drawn from my finger and again replaced on it; a

<sup>1</sup> "I am informed by my friend Professor Boutlerow that he tried almost the same experiments as those here detailed, and with still more striking results. The normal tension on the dynamometer being 100 lb., it was increased to about 150 lb., Mr. Home's hands being placed in contact with the apparatus in such a manner that any exertion of power on his part would diminish instead of increase the tension."—*Further Experiments on Psychic Force*, by William Crookes, F.R.S.

pencil and a handkerchief were taken from me, while Home's hands were resting on the table before our eyes. I particularly experienced this kind of manifestation during a séance held at my own house in January 1872, in presence of several persons. Fingers like those of a small baby-hand, and warm as in life, touched my hand and sought to draw from it a small bell which I was holding under the table. On letting go my hold, it did not fall, but moved about under the table, ringing the while.

"Facts witnessed under such conditions completely convinced me.

"Crookes and many others have not only felt but seen hands appear in the light at the séances of Home; but, for my own part, I only once saw, on stooping beneath the table, the *silhouette* of a hand on the keys of an accordion which Home was holding in one hand bottom upwards, while his other hand was on the table.

"It is only in séances with Home that I have heard the accordion play. The airs were distinctly rendered, with all the varieties of musical expression. This manifestation is described in the following words by a musician who was present at a séance at the same time as myself:—'The airs were both simple and varied. An air was interrupted as if the instrument had been taken by another hand; and the accordion gave forth perfect chords, followed by a harmonious prelude of a religious character. Towards the end the sounds became fainter; we listened to them, holding our breath, and they retreated as if into space.'

"Only a person who has never seen and heard it<sup>1</sup> could suppose this manifestation capable of being produced by the one hand with which Home held the bottom of the accordion. But, if that explanation were credible, it would still fail to demonstrate how the same accordion, during the same séance, when held in the same manner by other persons present, could be played on; as happened, for instance, when it was in the hand of the musician whose words I have just quoted; held by whom, it gave forth, in my hearing, a succession of chords."

Professor N. Wagner's testimony was published about the same time as that of his colleague. It appeared in the *European Messenger*.

"It was with the greatest incredulity and distrust of the phenomena of Spiritualism," writes Wagner, "that I accepted the invitation of the Professor of Chemistry, A. von Boutlerow, to take part in a séance with Mr. Home, who was then staying with him in St. Petersburg. One evening, accordingly, I presented myself, but Mr. Home was unwell. I proposed that we should try a séance without his presence. I selected a table which had never been utilised for this kind of experiment, and we took our places around it to the number of five. Our party consisted of two good friends of mine

<sup>1</sup> Dr. W. B. Carpenter, e.g.

who had never been present at a séance; Boutlerow, a lady who was excessively fearful that these manifestations might have a diabolic origin, and myself.

"We sat with our hands on the table for twenty minutes without anything happening. Suddenly the door opened, and Mr. Home appeared, enveloped in a plaid. 'Ah, so this is what is going on! Allow me to sit down with you,' he said.

"'No, no!' I answered; 'you are the very person whom we don't want at present.'

"'Allow me, however, to stay for just a moment;' and he took his place beside me.

"Before five minutes had passed the table began to move on my side. 'Is it not you who are pushing it against me?' I asked of the lady above referred to. Mr. Home, turning his hands palm outwards, placed the backs of them on the table, and requested us all to do the same. We complied; but this did not hinder the table from continuing to move. 'Your feet, where are they?' I asked Home; and after showing them to me enveloped in the plaid, he placed them on mine, but, nevertheless, the table continued to move towards me, pressing me more and more closely.

"This was my first acquaintance with the manifestations. What was passing under my eyes seemed to me sufficiently singular. The table was moving without being pushed by any one; that was plain. No one had any interest in mystifying me; Home alone might be suspected; but his feet were placed on mine, and his hands, with the palms turned outwards, were before my eyes, and I was watching them. I nevertheless formed theories to explain the facts; and where there is no foundation, theories have no longer any limits. It came into my mind that the whole thing was a trick which I could not detect; and I avow that this impression possessed me more strongly than any other; but, on the other hand, it was extremely difficult to conceive of jugglery being practised under such conditions as were those of the manifestations which occurred with Home.

"During his stay at St. Petersburg I had the advantage of being present at two others of his séances. On the first occasion nothing took place, at which we were greatly disappointed. This séance, the day for which was appointed in advance by Home himself, proved clearly to me that the manifestations were not dependent on his will. The other séance was a success. On the table, which was covered with a thin cloth, were placed two lights, a small bell, and an accordion. Including Mr. Home, we numbered seven persons; three of my colleagues, besides Professor Boutlerow; General Melnikoff, who sat on the left of Mr. Home, and myself, who was on his right.

"After ten minutes, slight movements commenced; then the table vibrated, and raps were heard on it. It inclined itself in opposite directions, which proved that the movement could not be produced by Home; and further testimony of this fact was afforded by his occasionally clasping his hands, and even taking them off the table

at times. The arm-chair in which he was sitting was twice drawn back from the table. He quietly rose and replaced it, saying, 'They have drawn me away from the table.' As the séance continued, the raps became more distinct. They were intermittent. Commencing by faint sounds, they arrived gradually at a maximum of loudness, and then came silence. These raps occurred in places indicated by us on the table, the wall, the floor, and even under our feet. At one time the table inclined itself successively towards all four sides, and at each of these movements a very loud rap was given, as if some one had struck with the fist exactly in the centre of the table. One of the persons present inquired whether the alphabet should be spelt over, and the three raps were heard; but on the letters of the French alphabet being repeated, no word was formed. Shortly afterwards the table-cover, on the side where Mr. Home was sitting, was wrinkled, as if some one were lifting it from beneath, and between him and me there appeared something round, which stirred under the cloth. I promptly placed my hand on the spot, and all disappeared. Some moments afterwards the same appearance formed itself nearer to me, the round shape being more distinctly marked. I again sought to seize it, and again the object evaporated under my hand.

"Mr. Home now took the accordion, which was on the table, by the side opposite the key-board, and held it level with the table, near the General. The instrument was forcibly pulled from below; then Home withdrew his hand, and the accordion remained suspended in the air. 'Will you have the kindness to look under the table, General, and see whether any one is holding it?' said Home. General Melnikoff complied; but although he passed his hand between the floor and the suspended instrument, he found nothing. Some moments afterwards the accordion fell to the ground. Home, on lifting it, saw that the key-board was detached from it. 'Here is the cause,' he said, 'why the spirits were unable to play.'

"How explain the means by which the instrument could remain suspended untouched in the air!

"There remained to me, from all I witnessed, a single incontestable conviction—that the facts undoubtedly existed. These phenomena sometimes occur in the presence of Home without the conditions of table and séance; but for their occurrence or non-occurrence *he* is in no way answerable, for it is not in his power to call them forth. I have been told by Mr. Home himself that manifestations sometimes cease for months together.

"I cannot find an explanation of these manifestations either in the unconscious muscular action by which Faraday tried to account for them twenty years ago, or in the strange theory of 'unconscious cerebration' set forth by Carpenter, which explains absolutely nothing."

## CHAPTER XII.

*LAST YEARS ON EARTH.*

No man of his time had a wider circle of friends than Home, and few can have had a more extensive correspondence. His pen was seldom laid aside, even for a day; and had the hundredth part of the letters written by him been placed at my disposal, I should have had material for volumes. Home wrote few pages that would not have been of value to me in my task; for his character found unconscious expression whenever he took up his pen. The sentiments that animated him were the source of a never-failing flow of the happiest imagery. He was fertile in illustrations and comparisons, so consoling and so profoundly pathetic and true, or at other seasons so diverting, that it was impossible to read them without appreciating this attractively-gifted nature. In the letters of Home, as in his life, there is nothing that need be concealed. Were all that he ever wrote brought together and published, his memory could only gain by it. His own pen would render him justice—as it does in these pages. The serenity of his nature was reflected in his language, and the affectionate sympathy with which he inspired his correspondents finds abundant expression in their letters to him. In those letters they recognise him as he is, and render justice to him in everything. Nothing can be warmer than the protestations of gratitude, affection, and esteem in which the pens of his friends abound. I have received various tokens of this kind, declaring how much the writers owe to Home and how high an esteem they cherish



for him. Even persons who did not know him express their profound regret at never having had the good fortune of appreciating him personally. These private declarations of esteem, gratitude, and admiration possess no value for me. I do not need to be told what Home was, and I am no more vain of these testimonials than he was himself; but the world which did not know him has great need to learn the truth; for the mission and the man are inseparable. That which made Home an object of esteem in private cannot become an object of contempt in public. If these persons had shown the same resolution in proclaiming the truth that they have shown in keeping silence, humanity would have deduced more edifying conclusions from that problem of man's destiny beyond the tomb which has forced itself, in all ages, upon all serious minds. It is not the personality of Home that they have immolated, but the truth, the cause and the means for which he was the instrument of Divine Providence.

There have been famous men to whose memory their friends could render no kinder service than that of withholding their letters from publication; and there have been others who seem never to have sat down to write a letter without reflecting that they might possibly be addressing it to posterity, and whose constant effort has been to present themselves to that severe judge under the most favourable colours possible. Home belonged to neither of these classes. He wrote only for the person to whom he was addressing himself; and wrote, as he talked, impulsively and unreservedly.

If it were possible to give to the world letters never meant for publication, they would show, better than any words of mine can, why he was so much loved by those who really knew him.

A few passages in such letters, that relate to incidents of his life or give expression to his views concerning his mission, are all that I shall print here. My first extract is taken from a letter of July, 1858, which he

addressed to his first wife a week before their marriage. Home writes from the palace of Peterhoff, whither he had just been summoned by the Emperor Alexander:—

“PETERHOFF, *Lundi Soir.*

“Je n’ai pas eu un instant toute la journée à t’écrire ; mais, maintenant, après avoir bien soupiré (au frais du gouvernement), je t’informe officiellement que je suis à Peterhoff—et à demain ma présentation à leurs Majestés. Je suis logé au palais ; et si mon domestique ne me comprend pas, je ne le comprends pas non plus.

“*Mardi Matin.*

“Hier, au soir, le Comte Schouvaloff père est venu me faire visite, et je n’ai pu finir ma lettre. Ce matin j’ai visité Peterhoff avec le Comte Bobrinski, aide-de-camp de l’Empereur. Je suis charmé d’être venu ; et puisque ‘en Russie on ne sait pas ce que c’est qu’un Medium,’ on saura maintenant que c’est un gentil-homme tout autant qu’un autre. Et puisque l’on m’a pris pour un ‘faiseur de tours de passe-passe,’ on verra qu’on s’est trompé ; et voilà tout.

“Tu peux imaginer mon étonnement quand je trouvais ces messieurs si croyants ; il y en a même qui possèdent le don de seconde vue ; et toute la soirée d’hier on m’a raconté des choses étonnantes. Donc, j’aurai le plaisir de ne pas être le seul ‘faiseur de tours.’

“Ma vie est assez triste, car toute personne qui a un pouvoir incompris est nécessairement soupçonnée dans ce monde—et, du reste, c’est naturel.”

At the end of May, 1860, Home left London on a short visit to Scotland. From Edinburgh he writes to Mrs. Home:—

“J’avais tant d’émotion en voyant les endroits où ma jeunesse s’est passée, et quand j’ai passé en revue toute ma vie. Dans une dizaine de jours tu vas recevoir des photographies de mon village ; soigne-les bien, je t’en prie. Tu verras une bien simple petite maisonnette, où il y a une petite rivière devant la porte. C’est là où ma mère adorée a tant souffert. L’église est celle où j’étais baptisé ; et la photographie où tu ne verras qu’un jardin et le mur d’une maison, est où se trouve la maison de mon grand-père, et où ma mère était née.”

The village of which Mr. Home speaks in this letter was Currie, near Edinburgh, where he was born, and where his parents resided until they left Scotland for America. In the most ancient and at the same time

the poorest quarter of Edinburgh—the Canongate—there now stands, near a church, a modest fountain which bears the name of him who was so often the providence of the unhappy.

In my former work, I have described some of the incidents of Home's life during the months in which he was a spectator of the war of 1870. He witnessed the investment of Paris and great part of the siege, with feelings that find expression in the following letter to England:—

“HEADQUARTERS OF THE KING, VERSAILLES, *October 25, 1870.*

“MY DARLING SACHA,—I have not heard a word from you as yet, but I know it is the fault of the post. . . .

“The post has been, and is still, delayed by the siege-guns being brought to the front. Very terrible work all this is; and I will be right glad to be home again. We had a terrible battle on the 21st. I was in the very midst of it, and aided in bringing home the wounded. It was a very fearful sight, and even now seems like some dreadful dream. I will tell you all about it soon.

“On the 20th, I went to visit a beautiful château some three or four miles distant from Versailles; and while there, the King came: he remembered me quite well, though I have not seen him since 1857; and came and had a long chat with me.

“I write on some paper which was taken in Strasburg the day it capitulated. . . . I wish much to see you all, and count the hours when I can be free.”

At the time when this letter was written, Mr. Home was acting for one or two English and American journals as their correspondent at the German headquarters. From his letters to the *San Francisco Chronicle* I take a few passages which afford glimpses of his surroundings and experiences during the great siege.

Writing from the headquarters of the King on October 17, 1870, Home says:—

“General Ducrot is in Paris doing all he can to make himself useful. Yesterday, at breakfast, a great personage, whose name I am not at liberty to give, told me that one morning General Ducrot said to him that he would like more liberty than he then had to walk about, and as he was on parole in fact, greater freedom ought to be given him. This gentleman replied that it was true, but hoped that he would not give them any trouble.

“General Ducrot placed his hand in tragic style on his breast,

and said, 'Your Highness must remember, first that I am a French gentleman, next that I am a French soldier: it would be impossible for either to break his word of honour.' That same evening General Ducrot had fled. As surely as he is retaken, so surely will he be shot."

On the 22nd of October Home writes:—

"Yesterday, the 21st, I had arranged to drive with General Hazen at one o'clock. While we were driving I told the General that I heard firing, and evidently near us; we stopped the horse, and sure enough, a fearful din was going on. Some soldiers told us to leave our conveyance in the courtyard of a deserted house, which we did; and I then climbed a tree, from which I could see the masses of Prussian artillery on a hill about a mile and a half distant. I counted in the space of a minute 140 discharges of cannon, while the discharge of musketry could only be likened to the roaring of some mighty river. The bombs were flying on every side, and the whistling sound one hears as they speed on their death-dealing mission, and then the explosion as they burst, all combined to make an impression not easily to be forgotten. . . . I had to leave my fine look-out, for the soldiers told me, and I could see and hear that they spoke the truth, that the French were advancing and I was in a position of great danger."

Home renders full justice in these letters to all that was worthy of admiration in the vanquished, and expresses his confidence that "France will rise again. I still believe it," he says in one of his last letters, "and that this scourging will be her ultimate salvation." At the same time he was far from blind to those defects of the French character which exhibited themselves so conspicuously during "*L'Année Terrible*," and contributed so greatly to ensure its disasters. He especially notes the perverse appetite of the French people for the pleasant fictions with which their press was constantly regaling them, and the unwillingness everywhere shown to look the facts of the situation resolutely in the face.

"The tendency to exaggerate is assuredly deeply rooted in the French nature," he writes. "The Paris press is giving imaginary battles, and in every case victory to the French. Nothing can be stranger than to read those newspapers giving graphic incidents of fighting as having occurred at various points of the line of Prussian outposts, when in many instances we have been at the very hour

specified at the position indicated, and know that nothing of the kind took place. . . . Gambetta has been issuing proclamations only remarkable for their utter falsity. He says that Paris is attacking the enemy, and has driven them from St. Cloud, Meudon, &c. I was at both places yesterday, and even know with a certain amount of accuracy where the great siege guns are placed. Men who can deliberately give this false and entirely groundless news to a suffering nation are no longer patriots; they are entailing misery on thousands in prolonging an unequal struggle, and deserve punishment of the most severe kind."

Again:—"It would have been better for the French had they known the true state of things from the very first. Even now there are many of them who will not entertain for a moment the idea that they are defeated. I have even heard them say that the Prussians every now and then, in order to keep up the spirits of their soldiers, dress up a few hundreds of their own men in French uniforms, and then parade them before the army, declaring that they are prisoners they have taken. . . . Another of their delusions is that the Prince Royal is ever imploring his father to make peace, but that the King ever replies, 'I will go into Paris at any price.' The King is considered by them all as a bloodthirsty monster, who enjoys the war and gloats over every battlefield."

These letters from the seat of war have many passages that show Home's deep and painful sympathy with the sufferings of the wounded, his sense of the heroic endurance with which they were borne:—

"Last night at ten," he writes on the 22nd of October, "a starlighted sky above and a deep sense of calm in the wide expanse of nature succeeded to a day of fearful strife. I went to aid in removing the wounded. . . . No word of complaint from these men! Our carriages and carts being filled, we walked back by the side of them; and during the journey, which must have lasted an hour, I only once heard a groan, and in all probability even that was but a death-groan, for one soul had passed away when we arrived at the hospital."

The writer modestly abstains from telling of his constant visits to the hospitals, and of the many hours passed by him in ministering to the inmates of their long lines of beds; but some idea of the grateful memories of Home which were preserved by the sick and wounded who saw him so often at their bedsides may be formed from the letter of Lieutenant Sauer given in my former volume (pp. 328, 329). Writing

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from Beyrout, in Syria, during 1872, the same officer tells Home:—

“Returning from a journey to Baalbec, I have the great pleasure of finding your dear and friendly letter . . . with the news of your marriage. I long for an opportunity of making the acquaintance of your wife, in order to be able to relate to her how much charity and friendship you always showed to the poor soldier whose acquaintance you made at the most terrible moment for him of all the campaign.”

In one of his last letters to the *Chronicle* from Versailles, Home related (November 9th) that the Château was being put in order for the reception of distinguished guests, and that the wounded were being sent home to Germany or removed to other shelters. The famous building was fast being retransformed from an hospital to a palace; but although the sick and wounded were no longer there, whose spirits he had cheered and whose sufferings he had alleviated by every comfort and consolation in his power, their presence remained inseparably associated in his remembrance with the splendid galleries of Versailles. The contrast which the Château presented to its aspect of a few weeks before could not banish from his thoughts the mangled forms that had filled it, the scenes of terrible suffering and brave endurance which had been daily and nightly before his eyes while the autumn was passing into winter:—

“It matters little how brightly it looks,” he wrote; “I shall ever picture the long line of beds and the poor wounded forms writhing on them. The air laden with perfume from flowers came in at the open windows, and the brilliantly coloured pictures hung on the walls as records of the ‘glory of France;’ and still one could only think of the fearful sufferings of the wounded as they lay there. It is true that they felt no want—every possible comfort and attention was theirs, and all that medical skill or ceaseless care could devise to alleviate their sufferings was done. But if you could have gone there as I have done, in the stillness of night, and have seen those long and lofty rooms lighted by some three or four hundred candles (enclosed in a kind of wire framework, to be carried about by the doctors or nuns); could you have heard the groans of men who only

groaned in their sleep, but were uncomplaining when awake, I assure you it would not be easy to banish it from your memory.

"One night I had gone to visit a patient requiring constant watching; and in passing the bed of a young Pole who had been badly wounded, he asked me to lift him up a little in his bed. As I touched his hands, I thought them unusually cold, and I asked him if he felt worse than he had done. His reply was, 'I am better—much better; but I want the light that I may see you.' I placed him gently back on his pillow, and brought the light. As I did so, a seraphic smile came over his young face, and the light of a never-ending day dawned upon him. In the palace all was silent as the tomb. Over his bed was one of the large pictures representing some of the first Napoleon's victories, and a cruel mockery it seemed. I could almost have torn the picture down and trampled on it."

Not many letters written by Home in years previous to 1870 have come into my hands; and from the few which have been sent I have already taken, in the course of this and my previous work, almost all the passages that relate to incidents of his life or to the light in which he viewed his mission. Matters personal to the correspondents to whom his letters were addressed, it has never been my intention to touch upon. In asking the friends of Mr. Home to do me the far from difficult kindness of lending me any letters he had written to them that might seem to contain matter of biographical interest, I could feel no desire to print more than such portions as spoke of his own life, his struggles, sacrifices, and sufferings in the cause of Spiritualism.

The letters that yet remain to be given—or, rather, to be quoted from—belong to the ten or twelve years subsequent to 1870. After our marriage in October, 1871, Home was little in England, but he corresponded frequently with his many friends there; and one or two of their number have placed selections from his letters in my hands. For the most part, they belong to the period during which he was engaged in dealing with the "Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism," but a few are of earlier date.

Writing to a friend in England at the time when some of the sêances took place which are described by

Professor von Boutlerow in a former chapter, Mr. Home gives the following particulars (December 18, 1871) of our journey to Russia after our marriage, and our reception there:—

“At Kovno, my friend the Baron Meyendorff and four of his aides-de-camp came to meet us; and on arriving at Petersburg *such* a gathering met us at the station. I was ‘used up,’ and did not leave the house for two days. *All* my friends are as I left them, and all *delighted* to welcome me. They are all rejoicing that we should have decided to winter in Russia. . . .

“We are with my brother-in-law Boutlerow, and last evening we had a little *séance*. As a matter of course, the circle in which Boutlerow moves is purely scientific; and I expect to meet with men whose minds are accustomed to study facts. I care but little the kind of men I meet, provided they will investigate in an honest spirit. God knows best how to advance His work; and I must only abide my time. I can well do this, for mine has been a life where patience has been a necessity.

“Mine is such a double life, so replete in many ways with deep joys—and then come the heavy clouds. I have only the perfect certitude of the ever-watchful care of God; and I endeavour to bear up. I have a very anxious time before me.”

The following year a great trial came to us:—

“Since Friday,” writes Home to Mrs. S. C. Hall, “the angels have been seeking to steal our Marie from us, and a few hours will decide the contest. . . . I was not resigned at first, but I am now, and I say in all sincerity, ‘His will be done.’ The extreme beauty of the babe is beyond belief—a very angel face; and if God spares her to us, I will ever feel that she has been so near the heavenly portals that I have been truly selfish in having at first prayed to keep her. This is a hard cross to bear, but ‘He doeth all things well.’ I will post this to-morrow, and by that time will be able to tell you whether heaven has one angel more, or whether my little darling will remain with us. My heart is very sore, and I am weak and ill.”

Another letter to the same friend announces the final gain of the protracted lawsuit in which Mr. Home had been involved concerning the little fortune of his first wife:—

“You must know,” he writes to Mrs. Hall, “that last night I heard from Russia that I had now £1500 of my suit. This will enable me to pay off the remainder of my Lyon debts” (debts contracted for the expenses of the defence to that suit; the plaintiff having been ordered to pay her own costs).



"There's good news for you! I can't tell you how sadly put about we have been, and how these debts have depressed me. I had determined to sell my jewels.

"God is indeed good to me; and I think this relief will tend greatly to restore me to a-kind-of-a-sort-of-a state of health. Can you kindly let my dear, good friend, Mrs. Senior, know of my good fortune? I know she will be pleased."

Memories of the France of the Empire were revived by our visit to Nice in the winter of 1874-5. Home found there several of the friends of former years, and among them his old and valued friend Count Alexander de Komar, whose last séance I have narrated in my former work. One of Count Komar's last letters is now before me, and shows that the affection he had felt for Home during nearly twenty years was all unchanged.

"The post has just brought me your letter, my dear Daniel," he writes, "and I hasten to reply to you by return of post, and to thank you for the fresh proof of affection you give me. That which I have always borne to you (*vous ai toujours portée*) will never change." (See "D. D. Home: His Life and Mission," chap. iii.)

The letter I next take up contains some of the last words written to Home by another friend of early days in France—the ex-Duke of Parma, who, on resigning his duchy, had assumed the title of Count de Villafranca.<sup>1</sup> As I have elsewhere said of him, he was one of the most finished representatives of manners and traditions that are almost extinct in Europe, and preserved to the last that union of perfect simplicity with perfect dignity which belonged to the world he had outlived.

Count de Villafranca came to Nice while we were there in the winter of 1874; and I had the pleasure of hearing him speak in earnest terms of the debt of gratitude which he owed to Mr. Home. His intention of visiting Nice had been announced in the following letter, perhaps the very last which Home received from him, for he passed from earth not many months later:—

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<sup>1</sup> See my former work, pp. 102-104.

"PARIS, September 20, 1874.

"MY DEAR AND KIND FRIEND,—I have just received your letter, which I have read attentively, and thank you for it. I am perfectly of your opinion that one ought not to yield belief to everything because one is a Spiritualist. Yes, our belief in the truth need not be blind—we ought not to give credence to all the manifestations, or *pseudo-manifestations*, that we may observe. But such is our poor humanity, that man falls, as a rule, into the extreme of either denying all or of believing all. From incredulity to fanaticism there is only a step. . . .

"I am glad that your health has improved; my wish for you is that it may continue to do so, and for myself, that I may have the extreme pleasure of seeing you again, and of shaking hands with you as a dear and good friend. I expect to be at Nice about the middle of November, and to remain till April. What happiness it would give me to have one or two quiet séances with you, in order to communicate with our friends beyond the grave (*nos amis d'outre-tombe*). . . . I remain always your devoted and grateful friend,

"VILLAFRANCA."

The pain and indignation with which Home had long watched imposture after imposture usurping the name of Spiritualism find frequent expression in letters of the years immediately preceding the publication of "Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism." Numerous passages in letters before me read like extracts from the pages of that protest:—

"They will tell you," he writes to a friend, early in 1875, "that 'Home is jealous of any and all mediums.' It is true that I am *jealous*, but not of *mediums*. I am jealous of the truth, and deeply pained when I see so glorious a truth made a means of money-making by imposture, as is but too often the case."

"I am writing a book," he tells the same correspondent in January, 1876, "to expose a few of the impostures of the day. Of course there will be a storm; but I do God's will, and abide the result. . . . I am very much more tranquil now that I have my work before me and can feel that I am doing my duty."

In February of the same year:—

"Your kind letter came this morning, and I reply at once, to give you an idea of what my book is to be. I go into Spiritualism, Ancient, Middle Age, and Modern. I make no sweeping charges against any one, but refer only to what is public and notorious. . . . I have some most charming letters from people who are strangers to me, thanking me for 'undertaking a work so much needed.' Side by side with these I get *unsigned* letters of a nature that makes one wonder where such beings come from. Of course there is a general

consternation in the camp ; for they know me to be very outspoken, and they are in great dread."

It was impossible for Home's sensitive nature not to feel deeply the malignant calumnies and perverse misunderstandings to which the mere announcement of his undertaking exposed him. "I have a duty to do, and it will be done," he writes ; "but God alone knows the hours of bitter anguish I have to bear."

An incident connected with the commencement of his task is related in a letter of January, 1876, to Mrs. Hall :—

"The very night you received my letter," writes Home, "my angel guides came to us, and our room became as light as noonday. They told me to have no fear—'that my friends on earth would feel the work to be one of strict necessity.' I place my trust in God and the guidance of His good spirits, who thus far have protected me."

In protesting against imposture, and in warning credulous enthusiasts of their folly, it was no part of Home's design to compile a list of detected charlatans and their dupes :—

"In no case," he wrote to the Halls, June 3, 1876, "do I touch the private life of any one. I point out the great and certain dangers surrounding the investigation of the subject, and I enjoin on every one most thorough and prayerful caution. I have a right to speak, and I am well convinced that many will hear my voice and be thankful.

"I have some very startling facts to give, and in every instance from the persons themselves. One is an instance of a young man, a Russian baron, whom I met in Nice two years ago. Last autumn I heard of him giving *dark séances*, and of flowers being brought, and all the usual results of these dark séances being produced. A certain Count P——<sup>1</sup> wrote accounts of these, and sent them to be published. I fairly implored the editor *not* to publish them, so fully was I convinced that it was all humbug. To make a long story short, I now have in my possession a letter from the young Baron, who, at my request, writes to me to say that not only was the whole thing a trick, but that he is an *atheist* ! Yet I was *openly insulted* for having dared to give an opinion thereon, only a few months ago."

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<sup>1</sup> Pereira.

Writing several months later, when his task was approaching completion, Home tells Mrs. Hall :—

“My book, as you are aware, is to be called ‘Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism.’ The ‘Shadows’ consist of the many immoral and dishonest practices seeking shelter under the wing of what ought to be a pure and elevating belief. The ‘Light’ of my work will be the closing chapters; and there I seek to appeal to common-sense, in proving that Spiritualism is a reality, *not as a separate religion*, but as the life-principle of every religion where God and His loving mercy is taught. I knew you would aid me in this, and I wanted facts outside of my *personal* experience. I have cited some very startling and impressive incidents that have taken place in my own experience, but I avoid saying they were personal.”

While “Lights and Shadows” was in progress Home was inundated with letters from friends in Europe and America, called forth by his announcement of the task in which he was engaged. I have given some extracts in my former volume: the following additions will, I hope, be of interest.

Writing from Rome on April 24, 1876, Mr. William Howitt says :—

“I am very sorry to hear you are so unwell, but it is something to know that you are still in this world. That stupid and wicked telegram<sup>1</sup> gave us a great shock. . . . How impossible it is for any decent mind to conceive the pleasure of inventing and propagating such diabolic lies.

“With respect to the malicious and equally precocious criticisms on your forthcoming work, the authors of these tirades must be in great dread of the book. But there is a race of people who are always trying to nip a thing in the bud. When my ‘History of Priestcraft’ was in the press, a well-known Quaker went into the Quaker’s yearly meeting in London, and announced that such a book was coming out, and advised the Friends not to read it! It was a very good advertisement of the book, as it naturally excited the curiosity of the Friends. I have no doubt that the same will be the case with yours.”

From the Tyrol, in July of the same year, Mr. Howitt writes :—

“Whatever I have printed<sup>2</sup> you are most welcome to quote.

“As to your own part in the matter :—Were it my case, I would

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<sup>1</sup> The false report of the death of Mr. Home.

<sup>2</sup> On the subject of the abuses of Spiritualism.

simply say, 'I hear that things to my discredit are being stated. I deny them on my conscience, and leave God and time to vindicate me.' This would answer all purposes. It would spike the guns of your enemies. They would find it difficult to go further. The more general the question was left the better. Such moderation would draw to your side the minds of the candid and the better-thinking.

"These, dear Mr. Home, are my most serious opinions, based on long experience; and I shall be very glad if you will kindly and thoughtfully consider them before you publish your book."

Home had no need to do so, for he was already in accord with Mr. Howitt, as the pages of "Lights and Shadows" show.

Some of the earlier letters of Bishop Clark are given in my former volume. More than twenty years after the séances to which they refer, the Bishop writes from Providence, Rhode Island, to Mr. Home, on hearing from him of his purpose to write a work that should be at once a warning and a protest:—

*"February 9, 1876.*

"Yours of the 19th ult. is just received, and I read it aloud to Mrs. Clark, and she responded, 'That is a good letter.' . . .

"It does not seem very long since I saw you waving your hand from the steamer at East Boston, as you went off alone into the world. But what changes since that day! What a strange life you have had, and into what strange recesses you have penetrated! You must, however, be very careful of your health—that is your weak point.

"I think that such a book as you propose to write will be timely. I have seen nothing of Spiritualism since we separated; and, in fact, its connection with all sorts of folly and wickedness would naturally indispose one from becoming in any way popularly identified with the subject. With your wide and true experiences you can do a great deal of good in this department. It would not, however, be wise for me to appear as a contributor. . . . It is only to the most learned and accomplished persons that I ever speak of the matter—the multitude would not understand me.

"I hope some time to see you again, and meanwhile I am very affectionately yours,  
THOMAS M. CLARK."

"A God-speed to the great and needed enterprise in which you are engaged," writes another American correspondent, Mr. Hudson Tuttle (Sept. 1, 1876). "A book like that you propose is needed, and no one can prepare it better than you. We here are in a strange state of transition; and it seems to me the larger the camel offered by the mediums the better for the credulous mass of swallowers. The demand for marvels is insatiate—so great, that a class

propose to shut their eyes to make them greater. Spiritualism will run a brief career to ruin if this tide is not at once stayed."

Serjeant Cox had attempted to carry on his researches in the absence of Mr. Home from England, and had met with most disappointing results. The testimony of the learned Serjeant to his experiences with Mr. Home will be found on page 394 of my former work. Instead of repeating it here, I will supplement it with the concluding passage of his lengthy letter. After expressing a hope that mankind might before long be in a position to determine whence the phenomena come and to what they point, the Serjeant continued:—

"It is a great misfortune to the cause of truth that your state of health prevents you from contributing to this great work. But I hope still that your recovery may enable you to do something more to promote honest investigation into the greatest and the grandest mystery that could engage the human mind."

Had not Home already done enough?

That Mr. Crookes did work of the highest value, I shall be the last to deny; and the imperishable services he rendered scientifically to Spiritualism were accomplished during his séances with Home. We have it on the testimony of Mr. Crookes, Dr. Huggins, and Serjeant Cox, that those séances took place in full light; and Mr. Crookes' papers on his experiments abundantly demonstrate the scientific accuracy of his observations and the care and thoroughness with which he tested the phenomena—not only by the evidence of his senses, but by the recording instruments which he had specially contrived for the purpose of these experiments.

The light-loving facts which he observed in the presence of Home will always remain of priceless worth. Their irrefutable nature has never failed to be recognised by the most sceptical reader of the pages in which they are recorded—provided always that the sceptic was a candid and honest inquirer, and had not sat at the feet of Dr. Carpenter.

While "Lights and Shadows" was in progress, Mr. Home had the grief of losing the aunt who had adopted him in his infancy, and of knowing that her death was directly due to the shock caused by reading the false report of his own departure from this life. The first intimation of her having passed from earth reached him in vision, in the manner related in the following letter to Mrs. S. C. Hall:—

"May 23, 1876.

"DEAR FRIEND,—This morning I told my wife that in vision I had seen a sheet of blue paper, and on it the words, 'Mary is now at rest.' Four hours later, the post brought me a letter from America. The paper was *blue*, and the first words were, 'Aunt Mary is now at rest.' This was my much-loved aunt who brought me up, and I loved her dearly. She has left my first copy-book, the slate I first used, and some things I had worn when I was a little boy. The telegram of my sudden death brought on a paralytic seizure, and she never rallied. May God forgive my enemies, for this is their cruel work."

Soon after the publication of "Lights and Shadows" we went to Russia. Writing from the far interior of the country, on June 29, 1877, Home tells the Halls:—

"Anything more of a wild, wild waste could not well be imagined; but I enjoy it. I seem to have left the world and its cares far away, and the past even seems at times only like a dream, wherein clouds and sunshine have been playing at hide-and-seek with each other.

"The journey up the Volga and the Kama was wondrously beautiful, and I fully enjoyed it. You will kindly cut out all the criticisms of my book, and send them in an envelope. You must not forget that this is Russia, and no newspapers are admitted till they have been read by the 'censor.' Where we are, we have a post only once a week, and have to go eight miles for that.

"The *New York Herald* gave me two columns fine print, and exceedingly nice. Good will come from my work—of this I am convinced. In any case, I have told only the simple truth, and that in the mildest possible form. I have done it as a duty, and I rejoice that it is done. I have seen the tendency of the movement in every possible phase, and it would have been coward-like to remain silent. I know that parts of it pained you—it did the same for us; but when a body is diseased, ought we not to at once strike at the root of the disease?

"Please send me all the criticisms. I don't care a bit for their being bitter—I am used to it."

Some of the remarkable proofs of spirit-identity received by Mrs. M. Hennings at séances with Mr. Home are related by that lady herself in my former work (pp. 278–280). Towards the close of the year 1875, an old and valued attendant of Mrs. Hennings died at her residence in Anerley. We were then at Nice; and there, a few weeks later, Home received a spirit-message, which he forwarded to Mrs. Hennings. She writes in reply (January 29, 1876):—

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—I only returned home this week. The first pleasure that greeted my return was the sight of your letter, and, when I read its contents, words cannot express the gratification imparted in a *twofold* sense—1st, that the faithful soul should have been able to give vent to her feelings to a friendly being; and, 2nd, should furnish such an excellent test of identity. Mrs. Scott Russell was with me when I read your letter. She was delighted with its contents, and sends kindly greetings.”

At Geneva, in the month of November following, Home received another communication from the same spirit, and again sent the message to Mrs. Hennings in London. She thus acknowledges his letter, and remarks on the proofs of identity that the spirit-message contained:—

“THICKET ROAD, ANERLEY, *November 26th, 1876.*

“Thousand thanks, dear friend, for your welcome letter and interesting communication from our good old S., now free from earth’s severe burdens. Besides being so wonderfully characteristic of one who was always setting people to rights, this is one of the clearest cases of identity—*e.g.*, her former bedroom having been changed into a spare bedroom, in order that Charlotte might sleep in a little room opening into mine—then, the reference to my indisposition, which was only a troublesome catarrh. . . .

“How thankful I am for the séances with you, which gave me *all* I wanted.”

“I must once more say,” writes Mrs. Hennings to Mr. Home, July 19, 1884, “that I shall ever feel indebted to you for having opened the channel to the greatest happiness of this and my future life.”

“There can be no doubt,” says the same correspondent in an undated letter, “that should you become strong enough, you could



regain your former position of the *Medium par excellence*, because all who are true and earnest in the cause would not dispute it, and you, of course, would be guided by spirit-influence. *But*, as your well-wisher, I should fear your being again victimised, after so long a period of illness and suffering."

In a letter of May, 1882, to Mr. S. C. Hall, I find Home adverting to the subject here touched upon by Mrs. Hennings:—

"My condition of health," he writes, "is such that the dear ones do not come, in fear of exhausting me. The past four months we have not had more than three messages, and those only on most important matters, and very short. I am promised, should my health be restored, an increase of power; but I will never allow myself to be exhausted as in the past. I will also never have a dark séance; for these, with the Punch-and-Judy boxes (otherwise cabinets) have been the curse of Spiritualism, affording, as they do, such ample scope for deception."

During these last years on earth, Home's pen was still employed in the true interests of the cause of Spiritualism, in his rare moments of respite from suffering. He wrote from time to time to the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of Chicago, to declare his sentiments, narrate incidents of his life and mission, or offer words of counsel and encouragement to Spiritualists worthy of the name.

"My health alone prevents my taking an active part in the struggle for truth *versus* error," he says, in a letter published by the *Journal* on December 23, 1882. "In all probability my day's work is finished, and I wait for the shadow that precedes the never-fading light in the home where envy, malice, and untruth are unknown. . . . It is a consoling and pleasant thought, in reviewing the past of my eventful life, to know that I have endeared many noble and truth-loving hearts to my mission as well as to myself.

"We were in St. Petersburg the past winter, and it gave me pleasure to meet with old friends of 1858, all giving me the heartiest of welcomes. As a rule, these keep aloof from the modern movement, inasmuch as the abuses so rife elsewhere have brought discredit to the cause.

"We had a most profound and heartfelt grief in the passing from earth, the 25th of March (at the ripe old age of eighty-five), of our dearly loved uncle, His Excellency Nicholas Aksakoff, father of Alexander Aksakoff. The uncle was a perfect type of the old-fashioned Russian Boyard, and hence the type of a perfect gentleman

(type fast becoming obsolete in our modern civilisation); a man whose word was law, and whose honour knew no blemish; justly proud of the name he bore, for his ancestors, like himself, had kept the name unspotted; a man of iron will when a duty was to be accomplished, and of this I have the written proof when he was already eighty-three years of age. Refined in manner, and a most learned scholar, he possessed a library which he had collected of the most choice and rare works, of an immense intrinsic value.

"My wife was his favourite niece; and I am proud to say that, though he was not a Spiritualist, I won not only his affection but his esteem. I am the more proud of this as his was not an expansive nature; he was reticent with his friendship. He rendered me a service in the year 1880, which will ever live in my memory during this and the coming life. True, it was only a simple act of justice, but it was done as a man of honour only could do it—so nobly done.

"The last interview I had with him when all his faculties were active, was my birthday, the 20th of March, 1882, five days previous to his departure from earth. Taking me in his arms, he over and over again kissed me tenderly, and said, '*Vous savez, Daniel, que je vous aime beaucoup.*' (You know, Daniel, that I love you very much.)

"In September, 1881, I translated and sent him some remarks made by Mr. Tuttle concerning my 'Lights and Shadows;' and I have a letter in reply, in which he says, 'I have read with the deepest interest the translations you so kindly sent me. The Spiritualist of our household would hardly relish them. I would fain read your book, so interesting and, above all, so conscientious. To accomplish this, I send the means (which I beg of you to accept as a friend) to translate and print it. Let the work be done at once, and kindly send a copy to your loving friend and uncle N. AKSAKOFF.'"

Mr. Home's next letter to the *Journal* had reference to some fresh fables which had just been added to the myriad already invented concerning him:—

"In the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of January 6," he wrote from Nice on January 24, 1883, "I find an article entitled, 'Mr. D. D. Home at Baden-Baden in 1857,' copied from a sheet known as the *Herald of Progress*. I beg to say that from first to last it is a downright fabrication. The names of some friends of mine are alone correct. Any one who either knew me or had assisted at a séance of mine would distinguish the falsity of the statements. The Duke of Sutherland never insulted me by offering me money, nor did I ever refuse to have a séance at Stafford House. I will ever have a grateful remembrance of the kindness of His Grace and the Duchess to us when my wife was passing away. The Prince of Prussia never offered me 5000 florins, for he knew too well my position and his father's interest in me to do so.

"If during my lifetime such statements are circulated, I often

wonder what will be written when I shall have passed to spirit-life."

Let the *New York World* answer.

Writing from Moscow on January 8, 1884, Home makes his last published protest against a superstition that above all others is repugnant to him—the ridiculous caricature of the ancient Egyptian doctrine of metempsychosis, which was produced in France by "Allan Kardec." None could know better or feel more strongly than Home how false and foolish was this identity-confusing creed:—

"Although my health prevents my having séances," he wrote to the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, "we have constant proofs given of the presence of the loved and gone before. The pleasure derived from a certitude of their presence is enhanced in observing how strictly personal identity is retained. Earth-life, so replete with cares, would have no recompense if, instead of meeting those dear to us, we found they had disappeared, re-incarnated into—heaven knows who or what. I use the word 'what' advisedly, knowing personally Kardecists who well remember having been sulphur, steel, &c. As to Alexanders the Great, Louis of all numbers, and Marie Antoinettes, there are scores of them, each being the only genuine. Strange that no Kardecist remembers having been a jackass. . . .

"All immortality is a myth if these repulsive vagaries could be proven true. Personal identity must be retained; and that it is retained, even to trifling peculiarities of character, is a fact well proven in my long experience. . . .

"We are passing the winter in Russia; and on arriving in St. Petersburg my first questions to old friends were to ascertain the position of Spiritualism. The replies, without exception, were most discouraging; and those Spiritualists I knew years ago keep aloof from all that goes on. I was told that one or two séances were held, but these were either in darkness, or under conditions preventing all investigation; and the natural result is that people who are really interested in the subject have no satisfactory opportunities given to convince them."

The year 1884 was one of almost constant suffering for Home; but when, in July, he at last found strength to take up his pen again, it was not to dwell on the months of agony through which he had passed, but to relate the constant tokens of spirit-presence by which their slow passage had been brightened. This letter of

July 28, 1884, to the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, was to be his last public utterance:—

“I have never been, during my lifetime, in such a sensitive and mediumistic condition as I have been for the past eight or ten months,” he wrote. “I also have never been given such indisputable and overwhelming proofs of the continuity of personal identity. I cite, out of many, one or two incidents, in proof of my assertion:—

“Two years ago a dearly loved friend passed away. During his earth-life his ideas of a future existence were clouded and undefined. The first time he came after the change, it was to express the certainty of his existence, and that all his mental faculties were not only unimpaired, but made keener, not being trammelled by the infirmities attendant on old age. He not only assured us of his more than ever deep affection, but that we would ere long have abundant proof of his interest in all that concerned our welfare. His expression was:—‘Full of joy to be with my only daughter and loved ones on the other side, and taking interest in your earthly lives.’

“As on earth, he keeps his word; and in every token of his presence he is the man he was, even in what would seem trifling, but which, on investigation, proves to be important. I give one proof:—Our travelling, the past winter, was so arranged that we obtained knowledge of a letter written only a short time previous to his departure from earth, which, as he since said, ‘would give us great pleasure,’ and it did so. The past winter, during the months of March and April, my sufferings from neuralgia were so terrible that I could not leave the house, even for a drive. Our friend was ever there; and I give one incident in proof of his tenacity, the same as when on earth, not to allow any one to consider that he would rashly make a promise that he could not fulfil. I was in an agitated state of mind concerning a very dear friend in England. During the night our guardian spirit informed me that the coming day I would have a telegram from this friend. The following day at 3 P.M. the telegraph messenger brought a telegram, and I opened the missive with delight. My disappointment may be imagined when I found it was from another old friend, the Baron N. de Meyendorff, General in command of the Hussars at Tsarskoe-Selo. Not three minutes after the receipt of this telegram a message came from our guardian. Half an hour later a telegraph messenger rapped at the door, and corresponding, but louder and firmer raps (as if in triumph) came on the sofa where I was reclining. This telegram was from the friend in question, and a part was: ‘Don’t worry. I am all right.’ Our guardian for once, not conversant with English, had some fourteen hours previously given me the idea, if not a literal translation, of what must have, at the time, been unwritten. I keep the two telegrams as pleasing souvenirs.

“A few days later I was very agitated and weak from the agonies

of pain, and he showed his tender and loving watchfulness in saying in French, of which the following is a translation: 'I do not wish even a pleasure to agitate you. A telegram, which will give you great pleasure, is about to arrive.' The telegram did come, and gave me great pleasure.

"These incidents may seem trifling, and unworthy the mission or occupation of disembodied spirits. If it can be proven that a nobler and purer mission can exist, let it be explained. After the first week of my mediumship I never asked my guides any questions concerning my daily life, for during that week I was tutored by my angel mother, and taught lessons never to be forgotten. I have in every instance had cause to regret, and once very deeply, when I listened to the counsels or advice of would-be friends, rejecting the directions of my guardians.

"I have ever found that no spirit in an advanced condition will *dictate*. Advice may be given, but, unless in very exceptional positions, the recipient is left to use his reasoning powers. One of the first messages from my mother was: 'God endowed you with reasoning powers: make use of the gift. Be truthful and truth-loving. God will bless your mission, and you will bring joy and consolation to many. We will watch with loving care over you.'

"The correspondence I continually receive proves the prediction of bringing 'joy and consolation' to be true."

A letter addressed to Mr. Home a few years before these words were penned may fitly find a place here. It was written by Mrs. Mary Howitt shortly after the passing away of her husband, William Howitt. I need hardly remind the reader that the Howitts were two of the early converts whom Home's mission made in England:—

"ROME, VIA SISTINA, 55: March 28, 1879.

"MY DEAR MR. HOME,—Thank you for your very kind letter. Our loss is very great, and we feel it deeply; nevertheless, we are overwhelmed by many mercies.

"I am much touched by the message of your angel Sacha;<sup>1</sup> and I believe that when it is God's will to remove me from earth, our spiritual being will become perfected. . . .

"I believe that the influences of an undying love, a preserving and directing care and guidance, are even now around us; so that—excepting in times of very natural depression, when the sense of our great loss and present loneliness is heavy upon us—neither I nor Margaret can realise that he is gone.

"We go to the beautiful cemetery where the dear outward form is laid; but it requires an effort of the mind to feel that he is

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Alexandrina Home, whom Mrs. Howitt had known and loved.

there—whilst mentally and spiritually he often seems very near to us.

“He was ready for the change, and it brought no fear or anxiety to his mind—nothing but a very natural sorrow to leave us and to close an outward life which had been made so dear by long-unchanging affection. . . . With every good and kind wish for your health and happiness, I am, dear Mr. Home, yours very cordially,

“MARY HOWITT.”

“I have had such a gem of a letter from dear Mrs. Howitt,” writes Home to Mrs. S. C. Hall. “I only regret that not one of his obituaries makes mention of his being a Spiritualist.”

In the summer of 1882, while we were at Mornex, in Savoy, a letter reached Mr. Home which deeply touched him. It was written by a complete stranger to him, a French lady who had lost her only son, and who—in that ignorance of the nature of Home’s gifts which prevailed in France—now addressed to him a pathetic entreaty to obtain her a message from her child. I have preserved a copy of Home’s reply:—

“HÔTEL DES THERMES, VICHY; le 22 Août, 1882.

“MADAME,—Votre triste et touchante lettre du 22 Juillet m’est arrivée à Mornex, et j’ai voulu répondre de suite; mais, comme parfois mes impressions et connaissance de présence de ceux qui sont plus près de Dieu, ne me sont accordées qu’après une attente plus ou moins longue, et souvent pas du tout, j’espérais avoir un mot de consolation à dire. Hélas! jusqu’ici rien; et je ne puis laisser votre lettre sans réponse.

“Je n’ai aucun pouvoir à faire venir ceux qui nous sont chers; mais j’ai la *certitude* que votre bien-aimé fils est auprès de vous, qu’il n’a pas, et qu’il ne peut pas cesser de vous aimer. Votre profonde mais bien naturelle douleur seule peut empêcher son progrès dans sa demeure spirituelle, où il attend votre arrivée.

“Dieu vous l’a donné: *il était, et il est, à vous*. Dieu, le Juste et le Bon, ne pourrait reprendre, ni annihiler, un tel don. Dieu, en sa divine Providence, l’a repris de la terre; mais vous le rejoindrez au ciel pour l’éternité.

“Je regrette d’être trop souffrant pour vous écrire plus en détail, en expliquant plus clairement la vérité de cette grande espérance. Depuis dix ans je suis bien, bien malade; et je dois éviter toute agitation.

“Agréez, Madame, l’expression de ma profonde sympathie,

“D. DUNGLAS HOME.”

How often must he have been the messenger and the instrument of consolation in responding to the poignant appeal of every variety of misery and suffering! It would be difficult to give a just idea of all the good that was effected by Home through his relations with a host of the bereaved and the unhappy who were scattered over the entire globe. His mission was all in all to him, and he sought only to efface himself. It was with a self-forgetfulness full of grandeur and of trust in the Divine love that he communicated the love of God to man, raising the veil which hides from us the life of those who have passed from this life before ourselves. As the gift bestowed by God never returns to Him with its mission unaccomplished, it is permissible to affirm that the seed which Home sowed so abundantly has not been wholly stifled, and that it has brought forth good fruits. The life eternal ought to begin in our souls here on earth, and true Spiritualism is a preparation for eternity in this world. Its work is to alter the natural bent of human will by substituting charity for egotism as the principle of our life. Obedience to the Divine Will constitutes the essence of all religions, whatever their difference of dogma, and forms the common element of this and the future life.

The memory of a beautiful life is an unfailing source of consolation; and even when he who is dear to us seems to be taken from us untimely, we ought not to lament, for he whose life has been spent in doing good carries with him into another and better phase of existence the happiness of having chosen the path that leads to God.

The objections which, in the present state of philosophy, are advanced against the class of phenomena witnessed in presence of Home rest commonly on a disguised atheism. They do not belong to philosophy in its wider and truer sense, but to a special and narrow philosophy that consists in shutting the eyes to a truth of which the acceptance would have the most beneficent consequences to humanity, and in denying the facts

that establish it. This volume contains a record of additional phenomena attested by witnesses still among us, and by others who have left irrefutable testimony to their experiences. This mass of evidence, although it represents only a small part of that which has been sacrificed by the silence of the witnesses, or otherwise lost, ought to dispose intelligent thinkers, if they are honest and free from prejudice, to the admission of the reality of the spirit-world and of man's spiritual identity. To substitute the conjectures of science for the work of God is to leave the most important of truths dependent on the fate of an hypothesis.



## CONCLUSION.

A REVIEW of the series of authentic biographical documents furnished in this and my previous work will demonstrate with what levity Home's biographers in the press and elsewhere have borrowed from each other, without examination, the most erroneous and contradictory statements, and how many ridiculous fictions, illogical prejudices, false suppositions, and chimerical notions are comprised in the epics that some daring but pretendedly-serious writers have composed with Home for their subject. If unproved assertions and hearsay statements are to pass for evidence against a man whose good faith is attested by a host of the most respectable witnesses, there is no longer a means of establishing the reality of any historic fact. For my part, all the evidence I cite rests on the authentic testimony of persons in every respect worthy of credit, and amongst whom many of the most honourable were long and intimately acquainted with Home. Side by side with other evidence, I have arrayed the proofs of the phenomena furnished through him to science, and acknowledged by the members of various European scientific bodies who investigated them. Such a body of documents establishing the fact that both the public and the private character of Home rose to the height of his mission, that his qualities were everywhere recognised, and that he constantly enjoyed the esteem of the many personages eminent in rank and intellect whom he numbered amongst his acquaintance, will perhaps inspire the seeker after truth with the profitable resolve to examine into the spiritual gifts of D. D. Home—into his life and his mission.



## APPENDIX.

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SOONER or later the voice of reason always makes itself heard ; and, in aid of the cause of truth, I think it not unfitting to subjoin here some extracts from the criticism of my former volume which was published (July, 1889) in the Journal of the Society for Psychical Research. It is signed by Professor Barrett and by Mr. Myers, the Honorary Secretary of the Society, to whom I owe the advantage of reproducing it:—

*“ D. D. Home : His Life and Mission.*

“The volume in which Madame Home, the second and surviving wife of D. Dunglas Home, has described her late husband's career as a ‘medium’ is one which assuredly calls for serious notice on the part of all who interest themselves in any form of super-normal phenomena. We have delayed our review for two reasons mainly—in the first place, in the hope (now gratified) of being permitted to examine the originals of the important letters cited in the course of the work ; and, in the second place, with the object of collecting such further evidence—whether corroborative or the reverse—as a year's inquiry could procure for us. Madame Home has been good enough to meet one of us (Mr. Myers) in Paris, and has there allowed him freely to examine the collection of autograph MSS. on which the book is founded. . . . The conclusion is that the letters given in the volume may be confidently accepted as genuine. In many cases the handwriting of the correspondents was already known to Mr. Myers ; in many other cases there were postmarks, official stamps, crests, monograms, &c., on the letters, which indicated their date or source, and in no case was there any circumstance of suspicion. The letters, textually examined, were found to be correctly given in the book, with some of those slight grammatical corrections, excisions of unimportant matter, &c., which are often needful when private, hastily-written letters are sent to the press. In no case was any unfair excision or alteration observed.

“We hold (and Madame Home shares this view) that it is our duty towards the promulgator of letters so startling as these *not* to take their genuineness for granted, but to assure ourselves thereof

with reasonable care before criticising the matter which these letters contain. . . . We have reason to hope, moreover, that these documents, which are filed in a way convenient for reference, may be ultimately placed in some position where inspection may be possible to future inquirers. . . .

"During Home's lifetime, the accounts which appeared of his phenomena—always excepting Mr. Crookes'—were of a very incomplete and even unsatisfactory kind. The principal record was contained in "Incidents in My Life" (1863 and 1872), in which book very few names of witnesses were given. Anonymous narratives of such an unusual character, even if taken as *bonâ fide*, could not possibly convince the scientific world, and it was, moreover, open to the ordinary reviewer to question the genuineness of testimonies thus loosely adduced. On the other hand, Home asserted that he withheld these names simply from consideration for the owners, who feared the ridicule and obloquy that awaited them if they came forward to bear witness. 'Certainly' (adds Madame Home), 'his consideration for timid friends was carried to the verge of Quixotism; but if a mistake, it was a very unselfish and generous one.' It has been Madame Home's object to show that the reason thus given by Home was the true one;—that the testimonies cited in 'Incidents' were perfectly genuine, and that many more remained behind. With this view she has put names to the records in 'Incidents,'<sup>1</sup> and has quoted letters from other witnesses, entirely concordant with those records. . . .

"The evidential value of 'Incidents in My Life' has been materially increased by the following letter, written to Mr. Myers, January 1st, 1889, by Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, the well-known solicitor, of 44, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

"Commenting on a reference of Madame Home's (p. 199) to Dr. R. Chambers' assistance in preparing 'Incidents in My Life,' Mr. Wilkinson says (and this is not inconsistent with Madame Home's account) that Dr. Chambers wrote only the introduction and concluding chapter of that work. 'I wrote,' says Mr. Wilkinson, 'very nearly the whole of it, Home staying with us at Hampstead, and producing all the letters and documents, and giving me the necessary information. Some of it he wrote himself, but very little.' Again, as to the important preface to the second edition of 'Incidents,' dealing with Sir D. Brewster, Mr. Wilkinson says: 'Not a line of it was written by him (Home), but by me, from information furnished by Robert Chambers.' Mr. Wilkinson adds, 'I submitted the proof-sheets of the whole work, as they came from the printer, to Dr. Chambers, who made hardly any correction in them.'"

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Here ends the testimony of the review in confirmation of the existence of the documents composing my former work. The

<sup>1</sup> Where recoverable.

theories, commentaries, and hypotheses which follow are pushed to considerable lengths, and constitute a protracted discussion, in which there is this novelty—its authors recognise that it would be folly to reject the mass of evidence furnished in presence of Home, or to refuse to consider any opinion but their own. But is a day ever to be looked for when the pride of science will no longer persist in clinging obstinately to theories and hypotheses that demand a blind faith in scientific dogmas as their indispensable condition? Is it probable that many can be found who will recognise that proofs of the identity of spirits are of far higher value and importance, and who will not relinquish the search for evidence until the world shall have been roused to recognition of the truth. Up till now the confusion of tongues has not proved a barrier to the seeker.

The fact that others have seen the documents which establish the life and mission of Home has its importance—not in the instance of the numerous witnesses who can still respond themselves to the demand for verification, but in cases where the original letters of persons who are no longer of this world attest those investigations of the truth, those sentiments and opinions, which the world is so apt to deny or explain away. My thanks are due for the exactitude with which the facts in regard to those documents have been rendered.

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In view of the references made in my two volumes to "The Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism," and of the importance of that book to inquirers into modern Spiritualism, I offer a copy of Mr. Home's work gratuitously to the purchaser of my present volume.



# INDEX.

## A.

- ADARE Abbey, manifestations witnessed by night at, 111-112.  
Adare, Lady, handles fire unharmed, 304.  
Adare Manor, séances at, 265-268.  
Adare, Viscount (Earl of Dunraven), experiences of, 223-224, 226, 256-264, 265-271, 279-280, 282-284, 285-288, 303-304.  
Aidë, Mr. Hamilton, and Home, 33.  
Aksakoff, His Excellency Nicholas, 365-366.  
Alexander II., Emperor, 341-342.  
Alexander, Mr. P. P., his testimony to the favourable conditions under which Dr. Findlater and himself pursued their inquiry, 141-142 ; discusses scientific methods of controversy, 220 ; an experience of Dr. Doun's narrated by, 237-238 ; records a token of spirit-identity, 264-265 ; remarks of, concerning Home's power, 265 (*note*) ; concerning scientific dogmatists, 294.  
Alteration in weight of objects, 312-313, 315, 325-326, 333, 337-338, 343-344.  
Andrue, Mr. F. C., testimony of, 54-55.  
Anonymous witnesses, 222-223.  
Apparitions at séances, 258, 261-263, 288, 290.  
Arnold, Sir Edwin, testimony of, 9-10.  
"As the arrow descends," 267-268.  
*Athenæum*, misstatements of the, 10-16.  
*Aut Diabolus aut nihil*, 125-126.

## B.

- BAKER, Mrs. Eric, remarkable manifestations at Florence narrated by, 106-109 ; *An Enquiry into the Mystery of Spiritualism* by, 112-115.  
Bavaria, King of, and Home, 179-180.  
Beattie, Mr. John, séances at Bristol described by, 297-298, 300-301.

- Bell, Robert ; his remarks on the curiosity of English society concerning Home, 124 ; further remarks by, 126 ; his comments on "the romances in the newspapers about Mr. Home," 127 ; Mr. Bell and Professor Faraday, 214-215, 216-219.
- Bellew, Mr. J. M., letter of, 185.
- Bereaved mother, letter of Home to a, 370.
- Bill, Mrs., the case of, 68-69.
- Biography falsified, 209-212.
- Bird, Mr. John James, testimony of, 87-88.
- Blackburn, Mr. C., first experience with Home, 185 ; handles fire unharmed, 257.
- Blackwood's Magazine* and Home, 125-126.
- Blanchard, Mr. E. L., testimony of, 28.
- Bligh, Mrs. E., singular letter of, 180.
- Boldero, General ; his narrative of séances with Home, 239-243.
- Boldero, Mrs., testimony of, 241, 242-243.
- Boston, Home at, 50-53.
- Boutlerow, Professor von, evidence of, 341, 342-345.
- Brittan, Professor, remarkable experience narrated by, 46-47 ; his further investigations with Home, 47.
- Browning, Mrs., extract from a letter of, 37.
- Brunker, Mrs. A., séance at York described by, 156-157.
- Brunker, Mrs., proofs of spirit-identity furnished to, 163-165 ; her startling theory, 165-167.
- Buckle, Mr. H. T., experiences of, 5-8.
- Bulkeley, Miss, letters of, 61-62.
- Burr, Mr. F., séances at Hartford described by, 40-44 ; witnesses Home's first levitation, 41-42.

## C.

- CAITHNESS, Lady (Duchesse de Pomar), some remarkable manifestations described by, 234-235 ; narrative of a séance at Brighton, 235-236 ; another séance, 245-247.
- Carpenter, Dr. W. B., and spiritualism, 293-296.
- Carrington, Mr. J. W., refers to other American investigators, 62-63 ; narrates his own experiences with Home, 63-65.
- Chambers, Robert, belief of, 30.
- Character of Home, 373.
- Chawner, Captain E. H., two remarkable séances recorded by, 161-171 ; sees Home raised in the air, 170.
- Cheney family, the, and Home, 40-45.
- Children, Home's sympathy with, 62, 83.
- Chinnery, Mr. S. F., testimony of, 133.
- Clark, Dr. T. M., Bishop of Rhode Island, testimony of, 39 ; letter to Home twenty years later, 361.



- Clark, Mrs., letters of, 53-54.  
 Coleman, Mr. B., describes a séance at Ealing, 83-84; his first impressions, 84.  
 Collins, Mr. W. H., 305-306.  
 Colombaia, Villa, séances at the, 104-110.  
 Communications in trance, 66-69, 77-78, 137, 144, 263, 270-271, 273, 290-291.  
 Concluding remarks, 373.  
 Cowell, Mr. Jermyn, his investigations of the phenomena, 181.  
 Cowper, Mrs. (Lady Mount Temple), experiences of, 19, 22-25.  
 Cox, Mrs., Home described by, 231; evidence of, 232.  
 Cox, Mr. Serjeant, testimony of, 302; corroborates Mrs. Honynwood's evidence concerning the handling of fire, 302-304; further experiences of, 305-309; letter of, 362.  
 Crellin, Mrs., letter of, 154.  
 Crookes, Mr. W., F.R.S., impressions before and after investigation, 95-96; reply to Dr. Carpenter, 296; attests the correctness of Mrs. Honynwood's notes, 306; hitherto unpublished evidence concerning the handling of fire, 308-309; fragmentary character of his published papers, 309-310; notes of séances with Home, 310-340; remarks on Professor von Boutlerow's experiments, 344 (*note*); his really valuable work done with Home, 362.  
 Crosland, Mr. Newton, narrates his first séance with Home, 92-93.  
 Crosland, Mrs., letter of, 93.  
 Crossman, Mrs. A., 119.  
 Crystal, vision seen in a, by a party of observers, 252-253.  
 Cumming, Dr., and Home, 152.  
 Currents of cold air at séances, 282.

D.

- "D's" narrative of a séance at Hartford, 57-61.  
 Day, Mr. and Mrs. Horace, letters of, 56-57.  
 De Burgh, Mrs., letters of, 147.  
 Dialectical Society, evidence given before the, 158, 223-224, 229-235, 255.  
 Dirckinck-Holmfeld, Baron, testimony of, 186-187.  
 Douglas, Miss, testifies to handling fire unharmed, 255; further experiences of, 305-306.  
 Drinkwater, Mrs. Farrar (Miss Ely); her impressions of Home in 1851, 65-68; letter written thirty-eight years afterwards, 68 (*note*).  
 Dunraven, late Earl of, contradicts the fiction that Home evoked spirits, 260; his lengthy investigations, 260; séance at Garinish, 262-264; séances at Adare Manor, 265-268; at Garinish, 268-269; in London, 271-275, 276-278.  
 Dunsany, Lady, a remarkable manifestation witnessed by, 230-231.

## E.

- EDGEWORTH, Mrs., letter of, 129-130.  
 Electricity and the phenomena, 140-142.  
 Elliotson, Dr., declaration of, 187.  
 Elmer, Mr. and Mrs., séances with, 45-46, 54.  
 Elmer, letter from Mrs., 55.  
 Elongation, the phenomenon of, 223-225, 240, 245.  
 Extensive correspondence of Home, the, 348.

## F.

- FACT and fiction, 373.  
 Falsehood, an extraordinary, 210-212.  
 False report of Home's death, a, and its consequences, 363.  
 Faraday and Home, 213-219.  
 Fawcett, Miss, letters of, 85, 86-87, 95.  
 Fechter and Home, a romance concerning, 126-127.  
 Fictions of the French press, 194-202.  
 Fire, contact with, 245, 255-257, 298, 304, 308-309, 339-340.  
 Fleming, Lady K., letter of, 97.  
 Florence, persons present at séances in, 97-98.  
 Flower, perfume of a, withdrawn and restored, 309.  
 Franco-German War, Home a spectator of the, 351-355.  
 French character, Home on the, 352-353.  
 Friswell, Mr. Hain, evidence of, 31.

## G.

- GAMBIER, Mrs. M., letter of, 172.  
 Garinish, séances at, 262-264, 268-269.  
 German officer, a wounded, and Home, 353-354.  
 Giannana, the monk, 105-110.  
 Gibson, Mrs. Milner, a séance with, 143-144 ; letters of, 144, 145-146, 178-179.  
 Gore Booth, Sir R., 271, 276, 278.  
 Grant, Mr. James, 33, 129.  
 Gray, Dr. John, letter of, 48 (*note*).  
 Gregory, Mrs. Makdougall, letters of, 149 ; a séance recorded by, 150-151.  
 Gregory, Professor, letter of, 148-149.  
 Gully, Dr., of Malvern ; his letter to the *Morning Star*, 133-135 ; affidavit during the Lyon suit, 136-137 ; his narrative of some remarkable occurrences at The Priory, Malvern, 137-140 ; letters of, 184 ; spirit forms seen by, 284, 288.

## H.

- "H. C.," letter to the *Spiritual Herald*, 88-91.  
Hall, Mrs. S. C., and English investigators of 1864, 192-193.  
Hall, Mr. S. C., letters of, 27-28.  
Hallock, Dr., evidence of, 48, 49-50.  
Hastings, Marchioness of, 124-125.  
Hawksley, Dr. T., further testimony of, 243-244.  
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, some Florentine séances of Home recorded by, 100-105 ; his singular comments on the evidence of Mr. Powers and others, 101-102, 103, 110.  
Heaphy, Mr., and *All the Year Round*, 31-33.  
Hennings, Mrs., letters concerning remarkable evidences of spirit-identity furnished through Home, 364-365.  
Hobson, Rev. A. W., experiences of, 183-184.  
Holland, séances in, 121-123.  
Homburg, séances at, 226.  
Home and a conjuror, 221.  
Home and Professors Faraday and Tyndall, 213-220.  
Home and the *Morning Star*, 220.  
Home and the stage, 188-189.  
Home and the superstition of reincarnation, 367.  
Home and the wounded, 353-355.  
Home at Amsterdam and the Hague, 121-123.  
Home at Peterhoff, 350.  
Home at Versailles, 351-355.  
Home, letters of, 341, 342, 350-357, 358-360, 363-370.  
Home, modesty and simplicity of, 154-155 ; mistakes concerning the position of, 155-156.  
Home on the abuses of Spiritualism, 358-362, 363, 365.  
Home powerless to call forth manifestations at will, 280-282.  
Home revisits his birthplace, 350-351.  
Home the messenger of consolation, 371-372.  
Home witnesses a sortie from Paris, 352.  
Home writing on spirit-identity, 367-369.  
Home's character as revealed by his letters, 348-349.  
Home's sacrifices to science, 340-341.  
Home, Miss G. Y., letter of, 301-302.  
Honywood, Mrs. B., séances at Malvern described by, 172-173 ; notes of séances in London, 271-273, 276-277, 288-292, 302-309.  
Howitt, Mrs. Mary, letters of, 21, 26, 369-370.  
Howitt, William, séances described by, 18-27 ; letters of, 360-361.  
Hughes, Mrs. G., 189-190.  
Humphreys, Mr. H. T., evidence of, 224 ; luminous appearance described by, 285.

## I.

IDENTITY, remarkable proofs of, 113-118.  
 Interview which never took place, an, 199-201.  
 Investigators, some English, 128.  
 Irvine, Mr. G. D., interesting letter of, 132-133.  
 Isham, Sir Charles, testimony of, 94.

## J.

JARVES, Mr. and Mrs., remarkable communication received by, 50-51 ;  
     their relations with Home, 51-53.  
 Jewsbury, Miss Geraldine, 30-31.  
 Jones, Miss A., phenomena witnessed by, 232.  
 Jones, Mr. J., evidence of, 157-159.

## K.

KATER, Mr. Edward, testimony of, 130-131 ; one of his séances with Home  
     described, 131-132.  
 Keith, Mr. Alexander, records the proofs of spirit-identity furnished to him  
     through Home, 298-299 ; letter of, 299-300.  
 Kirkup, Baron, letters of, 99-100 ; discusses spiritualism with Nathaniel  
     Hawthorne, 100.  
 Komar, Count A. de, 357.

## L.

LAMBERT, Rev. W., 95.  
 Landseer, Sir Edwin, séances with Home, 129.  
 Leading articles, certain, 209-210.  
 Lennox, Lord W., and Home, 228.  
 Letter, an extraordinary, 207-208.  
 "Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism," 358-362, 363.  
 Lindsay, Lord (Earl of Crawford), evidence concerning elongation, 223-  
     224 ; vision seen in a crystal by, 250-252 ; other phenomena described  
     by, 255 ; relates an experiment with a magnet, 255-256 ; spirit-forms  
     visible to, 279-280 ; witnesses the levitation of Home, 285.  
 Lister, Mr. J. B., 215-216.  
 Lockhart, Miss, experiences of, 172-173 ; remarkable letter of, 173-174.  
 Londonderry, the Marchioness of, letters of, 144-145.  
 Lowe, Mr. W. R., letter declaring his convictions, 91-92.  
 Luminous appearances, 45-46, 138-139, 144, 246, 252-253, 269-270, 279,  
     283-287, 300, 316, 329.

Lytton, Lord, fantastic theories of, 34-36; testimony of, 36-37; Mr. Rymer and Mr. Coleman refer to his experiences at Ealing, 81.

## M.

MACDONELL, Mrs. Idah, letters of, 119-120.

Malvern, spirit forms seen at, 284.

Manifestation, a beautiful, 225.

Massey, Mr. Gerald, one of Home's experiences narrated by, 33-34.

Mayall, Mr. J. E., his declarations to Home, 182.

Mercy, an errand of, 68-69.

Milford, Lady, 187.

Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Alexander, letters of, 5-9.

Movement of objects without contact, 21-22, 23-24, 26-27, 41, 43, 59-60, 63, 64, 72, 76, 82, 83, 84, 87-88, 108, 114, 158-159, 160, 168, 171, 179, 229, 232, 233, 234-235, 236-238, 240-241, 242-243, 251, 255, 258-260, 262-263, 266-270, 273, 276-277, 278-279, 290, 300-301, 305, 306, 313, 316, 320, 321-322, 324-325, 327-329, 330-333, 335-336, 338-339, 344-345.

Music heard at séances, Mr. Bell's and Dr. Gully's description of, 73-74.

## N.

NEWSPAPER fictions, 194-202, 209-212, 363, 366-367.

Nice, séances at, 177-178.

Nisbet, Mr. H., evidence concerning harmless contact with fire, 298.

No conditions imposed by Home, 280-282.

Norwood, séance at, recorded by a sceptical investigator, 159-160.

## O.

"OFT in the stilly night," 117.

Orsini, Countess, letters of, 120.

Otway, Lady, 188, 189-190.

## P.

PALGRAVE, Professor, opinion of, 218.

Parma, Duke of, 357; letter of, 358.

Peele, Mr., communications addressed to, 290-292.

Phenomena, hindrances to the, 281-282.

Phipps, Hon. Mrs., 148.

*Piccadilly*, reminiscences of Home by a writer in, 188.

Pickersgill, Mr., R.A., letters of, 152-153; paints Home's portrait, 153-154.

Pickersgill, Mrs., letter of, 154.

Plumptre, Professor, letter of, 228.

- Pomar, Duke of, startled by apparitions during a séance, 261.  
 Poulett, Lady, letter of, 147 (*note*).  
 Powers, Mr. (the sculptor), narrates to Nathaniel Hawthorne the manifestations witnessed by him at Florence, 100-104.  
 Press, tactics of the, 17.  
 Psychical Society, extracts from the *Journal* of the, 239-245.  
 Psychical Society's review of my former work, *see* Appendix, 375-377.  
 Public readings, 226-228, 297-298.

## Q.

- Quarterly Review*, Dr. Carpenter's article in the, 293-296.

## R.

- RAMSAY, Mrs., experiences of, 150.  
 Reality of the spirit world, 372.  
 Reincarnation, the superstition of, 367.  
*Religio-Philosophical Journal*, letters of Home to the, 365-369.  
 Requests addressed to Home by correspondents, 202-205.  
 Riko, Mr. A. J., furnishes a narrative of Home's séances with the staff of the *Dagblaad*, 121-123.  
 Romance, a, from the *Court Journal*, 199-201.  
 Rothkint, Countess, letter of, 93-94.  
 Rowcroft, Mr., evidence of, 229-230.  
 Royal Society, secretaries decline to investigate, 248.  
 Ruskin, Mr., séance with, described, 19-20.  
 Russian lawsuit, 341-342, 356-357.  
 Russian scientific men, evidence of, 341, 342-347; letter of Home concerning, 356.  
 Rymer, Mr. J. S., records his séances with Home in a pamphlet on *Spirit Manifestations*, 80-83, 85; grateful letter to Home, 86.

## S.

- SALZA, Marquis de, 177.  
 Sargood, Mr. A., declares his convictions, 184-185.  
 Sauer, Lieutenant, letter of, 353-354.  
 Scepticism no hindrance to the phenomena, 233.  
 Schouvaloff, Count, 342.  
 Science, a page of American popular, 210-212.  
 Scientific Materialism, 249, 371.  
 Scientific séances in St. Petersburg, 341, 342-347.  
 Scotland, some interesting séances in, 239-243.  
 Scott Russell, Mrs., letter of, 280.  
 Second sight, 270-271.

- Senior, Mrs., affidavit of, 176 ; letters of, 176 ; message to, 306 ; further testimony of, 308.
- Senior, Nassau, declaration of, 176.
- Shelley, Lady, letter of, 146.
- Sidgwick, Professor, at a séance with Home, 181.
- Simpson, Mr. J. H., testifies to the reality of the phenomena, 142 ; elongation and levitation of Home described by, 245 ; his investigations of physical phenomena, 250-252 ; vision seen in a crystal by, 252-253 ; his notes of séances with Home, 254-255.
- Smith, Captain Gerard, spirit forms seen by, 278, 288 ; interprets a symbolic manifestation, 286-287 ; further experiences of, 289-292.
- Smith, Mr. Martin, manifestations addressed to, 289-290.
- Smith-Barry, Mr., 272-273, 276.
- Solms, Prince of, requests secrecy concerning his belief, 174-175 ; Home respects his desire, 174.
- Somerset, Duke and Duchess of, 148.
- Speers, Miss, 307, 309.
- Spicer, Mr. Henry, evidence of, 41 (*note*).
- Spirit forms, 258, 261-263, 278-280, 284, 288, 290, 301, 332.
- Spirit hands, 23-24, 43, 61, 65, 72, 77, 79-80, 82, 84, 85, 90, 92-93, 101, 103, 105, 108, 113, 143-144, 157-158, 164-165, 169-170, 173, 181, 229, 242, 246, 258, 262-263, 266, 269, 273, 277, 283, 299, 301, 303, 305, 314, 323, 324, 325, 328-329, 331, 332, 339, 345.
- Spirit identity, Home on, 367-369.
- Spirit music, 73, 76, 84, 85, 113, 115-118, 131, 159, 160, 164, 168-169, 172-173, 225, 235, 236, 239, 242-243, 244, 257-258, 268, 272, 276-277, 289, 292, 296-297, 299, 303, 314, 315-316, 321-322, 324, 325, 327-328, 330-331, 334, 336, 339, 345.
- Spirit voices, 242-243, 289, 308, 324, 331.
- Spiritual Athenæum, the, 190-191.
- Spiritual discord, 272.
- St. Albans, Duchess of, 276, 278.
- Steinhock-Fermor, Count, letter of, 177.
- Suppressed testimony, 3-4, 349.
- Sutherland, Duchess of, and Spiritualism, 151-152.
- Swedenborg and the *Saturday Review*, 70.
- Symbolical manifestations, 286-287.

## T.

- TAPPAN, Mr. Lewis, letter of, 52 (*note*).
- Testimonial, the history of a, 2.
- Thackeray and his critics, 29.
- Thompson, Dr. G. S., evidence of, 296-297.
- Timid believers, 349.

Topham, General Sir W., and Home, 182.  
 Trollope, Mrs., 14-15 ; visit of Home to, at Florence, 98.  
 Trollope, Mr. T. A., and the Athenæum, 10-14, 16.  
 Tuttle, Mr. Hudson, letter of, 361-362.  
 Tyndall, Professor, and Home, 216-220.

## U.

UNAVOWED Spiritualists, 38-39.

## V.

VARLEY, Mr. Cromwell, F.R.S., describes some of his experiences, 232-233 ;  
 attests the conclusions arrived at by him, 233.  
 Veh, M. and Mme. de, letters of, 178.  
 Villafranca, Count (Duke of Parma), 357-358.  
 Vital energy exhausted by frequent séances, 184, 340.

## W.

WAGNER, Professor, testimony of, 345-347.  
 Wason, Mr. James, letters of, 185-186.  
 What Home lived to demonstrate, 249.  
 White, Mr. William, evidence of, 71-73.  
 Whitman, Mrs. S. H., and *Incidents in My Life*, 56-57.  
 Why Home did not meet Professor Tyndall, 216-220.  
 Wilkinson, Dr. Garth ; his description of "Evenings with Mr. Home and  
 the Spirits," 70, 75-80.  
 Wilkinson, Mr. W. M., manifestations described by, 22 ; innocuous contact  
 with fire attested by, 244-245.  
 Wiseman, Mrs., remarkable experiences of, 290.  
 Wyld, Dr., testimony of, 91.  
 Wynne, Captain C., 267, 279-280, 286.







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